

Critical Notice

JANET BROUGHTON, *Descartes's Method of Doubt*. Princeton: Princeton University Press 2002. Pp. 216.

I

In *Descartes's Method of Doubt* Janet Broughton examines in depth Descartes's well-known use of the method of doubt in the *Meditations*. This is a very stimulating book. The book is rich in subtle, interesting ideas, and the writing is engaging in perhaps the best sense for philosophy. It is not only extremely lucid (and often eloquent), but in addition one senses Broughton think the issues through on the page in a way that strongly draws the reader in. Broughton pursues the historian's aim of offering an interpretation of Descartes's method of doubt that accounts for the texts. She does so while pursuing the issues with philosophical intensity and depth and connecting her interpretation to contemporary investigations in skepticism. Her evaluation of Descartes's use of the method is mixed: she thinks his ambitions in using it are 'splendid but doomed, and highly instructive' (xi). After describing the contents of the chapters of the book, I will focus on two issues: Broughton's interpretation of Descartes's anti-skeptical strategy and her treatment of transparency of the mental.

The book begins with an excellent introduction in which Broughton considers various answers to the question why Descartes used skeptical arguments. She rejects the view that Descartes was motivated by a conception of knowledge as requiring certainty. On her view, there is, however, real support for proposals in the literature according to which he was interested in refuting skepticism and introducing, surreptitiously, the metaphysical foundations of mechanism. In addition, but not unrelatedly, Descartes wanted to undermine trust in the senses, and he wished to develop a particular conception of the mind. Finally, Descartes thought that use of the method of doubt will result in a particularly solid foundation for the truths that emerge. This last purpose is the one that

particularly interests Broughton. Descartes, she argues, uses his method of doubt because it 'enables him to execute a simple and coolly calculated strategy for establishing the first principles of philosophy he believes to be true' (17). The doubt, in her view, is artificial and strategic, and meant to yield knowledge by uncovering its preconditions. So one attractive feature of the book is this. Although she focuses on the skeptical strategy, Broughton sees this strategy as connected to Descartes's aim to establish a new system of thought, a system of epistemological and metaphysical claims that support mechanistic science.

The book falls into two parts: in the first, Broughton explains how Descartes's skeptical arguments work. In chapter 1 she considers the question who the meditator is supposed to be: anyone, the person of common sense, a scholastic? None of these interpretations is quite satisfactory, she argues. In her view, the conception of the meditator is not entirely coherent: Descartes seems to project some of his own beliefs into the meditator's stance, in particular his view that his belief system is constructed on the basis of childhood beliefs that are false. But this view really is the result of the project of the *Meditations*; it should not be part of its starting point. In chapter 2 she offers a discussion of ancient skepticism, Pyrrhonian and Academic, with which she compares Descartes's thinking on various occasions in the book. In chapter 3 she explains her view that the doubt is artificial; it is not an extension of prephilosophical common sense thinking. And the doubt is meant to undermine the *certainty* of our ordinary judgments, but not, she argues contrary to a common view of Descartes, their *rationality* (46-9, 92). Broughton points out that Descartes finds pursuing the doubt hard because he keeps lapsing into thinking of beliefs like 'here is a hand' as, in his own words:

what in fact they are, namely, highly probable opinions — opinions which, despite the fact that they are in a sense doubtful, as has just been shown, it is still much more agreeable to reason [*multo magis rationi consentaneum*] to believe than to deny (AT VII 22/CSM II 15, emphasis Broughton's, quoted on p. 47).¹

In chapter 4 Broughton explains the skeptical arguments as each offering a skeptical scenario, that is, 'a story about how I have come to have the

1 I follow Broughton in using the translations from CSM — except where I indicate that modifications are needed. References to Descartes are to be understood as follows: AT: Charles Adam and Paul Tannery, eds. *Œuvres de Descartes*, 11 vols. (Paris: CNSR and Vrin 1964-1976); CSM: *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, 3 vols. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, Dugald Murdoch, and (vol. 3 only) Anthony Kenny, trans. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1985-1991).

beliefs I have, a story according to which the beliefs are false; and it is a story that I see no way to rule out as the correct story about my beliefs' (64). Defeat of the doubts requires defeat of the skeptical scenarios, and that in turn requires understanding of the connections between sense perception, the body, the external world and the creator of our intellectual capacities (71). In chapter 5 she relates her reading to ancient skepticism and common sense. She rejects Curley's view that Descartes's strategy is Pyrrhonian;² that is, she does not accept his view that Descartes is arguing that we have equipollent considerations for and against various sets of beliefs.

In the second part of the book, Broughton addresses the question why Descartes thought 'not only that knowledge of the truth could be salvaged from storms of skepticism, but that those very storms somehow brought the salvage about?' (18) She writes, 'What I believe Descartes aimed to do was to establish the absolute certainty of some of his beliefs *by showing that their truth is a condition of his using the method of doubt*. Among these are the beliefs that he exists and that he has an idea of God' (98, emphasis Broughton's). And from there he thinks he can establish the truth of clear and distinct ideas, the truth of his mathematical judgments and the judgment that the physical world exists. All these wind up being conditions of the possibility of doubt. In the final chapter she explains how she sees the solution to the Cartesian Circle, the fate of common sense (some of its beliefs turn out to be false, for others a better understanding is offered for their justification), and, perhaps most interestingly, how her conception of Descartes's anti-skeptical strategy compares to transcendental arguments against skepticism. The latter start with claims about 'people's experiences or their cognitive states or capacities.' They then attempt to derive other statements on the ground that these are necessary conditions for these claims. Classical transcendental arguments rely on the skeptic's acceptance of fairly minimal starting claims to force her to accept a non-skeptical conclusion. But Descartes's arguments, as Broughton sees it, require less. They attempt to derive propositions by arguing that their truth is necessary for the possibility of doubting them. The skeptic need not accept the claim that one is doubting them, and indeed, the conclusion of these arguments is that one must reject reasonable doubt about the propositions in question.

Broughton's book offers various novel interpretations on components of Descartes's method of doubt, while also agreeing with existing inter-

2 Edwin Curley, *Descartes against the Skeptics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1978)

pretations on other components of the method.³ Some significant overall differences with previous interpretations are the following. Other scholars who have focused on the method of doubt (for instance, Curley and Frankfurt) have tended to claim that the concerns Descartes addresses with his use of skepticism are central to his work, or at least the *Meditations*.⁴ But Broughton refrains from doing so: she acknowledges an array of purposes Descartes pursues and merely claims that the concern with certainty is the one that interests her particularly. But perhaps most striking is her analysis of his response to skepticism. Broughton's approach is novel in arguing that Descartes's strategy attempts to refute skepticism (and thereby reveal the high level of certainty of the resulting claims) by unearthing conditions for the possibility of doubt. And in doing so she offers a very specific view of how Descartes uses the doubt. Traces of the idea that the skeptical arguments contain the material for their own refutation are present in the work of other scholars; in particular, others, such as Curley, have noted that the skeptical scenarios themselves require the meditator's thinking and existence.⁵ An obvious interpreter with whom to compare Broughton is Martial Gueroult, whose interpretation has a strong Kantian flavor and who often speaks of 'conditions of the possibility of x '.⁶ But Gueroult does not make conditions of the possibility of doubt the central idea to his interpretation of the refutation of skepticism in the *Meditations* and does not elaborate on this idea in nearly as much detail as Broughton does. So in arguing that Descartes's overall strategy is to refute skepticism by unearthing

3 For instance, like Margaret Wilson, Broughton sees the skeptical arguments as proposing causal scenarios on which the beliefs in question are false. See Wilson, *Descartes*, (London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1978), 41. And like Frankfurt and Curley she sees Descartes as relying on arguments that do not involve a starting point about which he is certain. The Dependence Arguments do not involve starting with the claim that I am certain that I doubt something (Broughton, 193-5). For strategies that don't require certainty see Harry Frankfurt, *Demons, Dreamers and Madmen* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill 1970), 177; Curley, 95.

4 Curley writes that 'It is this project, the project of systematically reviewing one's past beliefs and casting out those which do not conform to the highest standards of rationality, which defines Descartes's mature work' (44). And Frankfurt writes that in the *Meditations* Descartes 'is largely concerned with the problem of skepticism' (174).

5 See Curley, 86, 187-8. Broughton sees Curley's interpretation as most congenial to her own on this issue (99, n.1).

6 *Descartes selon l'ordre des raisons*, (Paris: Aubier 1968), 42. Or see the English translation, *Descartes' Philosophy Interpreted According to the Order of Reasons*, trans. Roger Ariew (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1984), 21.

conditions for the possibility of doubt, Broughton develops this idea well beyond what others have done. Furthermore, generally interpreters see Descartes's response to skepticism as involving a variety of types of arguments for the existence of the self and God, the truth of clear and distinct ideas and the existence of the physical world. But Broughton proposes that Descartes's response to skepticism involves a very specific, single overall strategy, the strategy of uncovering conditions of the possibility of doubt. This strategy directly establishes the existence of the self and God, and indirectly the truth of clear and distinct ideas and the physical world (98). It is this interpretation of Descartes's anti-skeptical strategy that I wish to discuss in detail.

II Descartes's Anti-skeptical Strategy

According to Broughton, Descartes argues that various claims are indubitable for me, the meditator, in the following sense:

it is impossible *both* that the proposition be false *and* that I be doubting whether it is true. Second, I mean to be saying that if I recognize that a proposition has this feature, then I can see that I cannot rationally doubt whether the proposition is true. (100)

This is the sense in which Descartes thinks I achieve absolute certainty about the proposition. Broughton proposes the following schema for the strategy:

1. If I raise a doubt whether (B), I must grant that (A) is true.
2. But if (A), then (B).
3. So if I raise a doubt whether (B), I must grant that (B) is true.

I will refer to this schema as the Indubitability Schema.

Broughton offers various texts, *suggestive* texts she calls them, in support of attribution of this strategy to Descartes. Here are two examples, both from the *Meditations*:

[Insofar] as I consider the fact that I have doubts, or that I am a thing that is incomplete and dependent, there occurs to me [*occurrit me*] a clear and distinct idea of a being who is independent and complete, that is, an idea of God. And from the mere fact that there is such an idea within me, or that I who possess this idea exist, I clearly infer that God also exists. (AT VII 53/CSM II 37)⁷

⁷ Descartes writes that 'there *occurs* to me [*mihī occurrit*] a clear and distinct idea of a

[During] these past few days I have been considering whether anything in the world exists, and I have realized that *from the very fact of my considering this* it follows quite evidently that I exist. (AT VII 58/CSM II 41, emphasis Broughton's)

Broughton uses different writings of Descartes's (the *Rules*, *Search for Truth*, and *Meditations*) in support of her thesis that this line of thinking is present in Descartes. But her aim is to analyze the argumentation of the *Meditations*, and she notes, rightly in my view, that the *Meditations* are different in their employment of the skeptical strategy from other works. The number of texts that suggest the strategy is, however, limited. Accordingly Broughton writes:

I want to concede at once, however, that Descartes does not reflect a great deal upon this strategy or treat it as being itself a topic of philosophical interest, nor does he advert to it everywhere we might expect, or want, him to. While I am confident that he used this strategy self-consciously, and that its availability was part of what led him to work out the method of doubt in the *Meditations* I do not think he was struck by the same aspects of the strategy that would strike us, or that he registered the same potential difficulties that we do. (104)

Now this strategy is very intriguing and philosophically interesting. And various texts in Descartes suggest it. At the same time, the strategy seems, let's say, submerged, and some of what Descartes says seems to go against it. So this prompts reflections on the status of the interpretation. I think it is true that there is a strand of thinking in Descartes that Broughton brings to light. I am not convinced that this should be described as '*the strategy of the Meditations*,' or at least, I think it is less prominent than Broughton sometimes suggests. But of course, a given thinker may, without noticing, express in his or her writing several different lines of thought. And I am convinced that Broughton has picked one out that is present in Descartes's writings.

Broughton sees different types of dependence arguments in Descartes, although she thinks they all conform to the Indubitability Schema. The variation in forms adds subtlety to her interpretation, but I have real doubts about the Schema. I will explore these doubts by examining Broughton's analysis of the argumentation for God's existence in the

being who is independent and complete, that is, an idea of God.' Broughton follows the CSM translation 'arises' instead of 'occurs to' here. I have altered the translation. However one translates the term, clearly Descartes does not mean that he *acquires* such an idea, since his view as explained earlier in the Third Meditation, is that this idea is presupposed by his conception of himself. And his idea of God is innate. His view is rather that he becomes aware of, or notices, this idea.

Third Meditation and of what is usually known as the *cogito* in the Second Meditation.

In her chapter on the Third Meditation, Broughton focuses on the following sentence from the quote from the Fourth Meditation provided above:

[Insofar] as I consider the fact that I have doubts, or that I am a thing that is incomplete and dependent, there occurs to me [*occurrit me*] a clear and distinct idea of a being who is independent and complete, that is, an idea of God. (AT VII 53/CSM II 37)

Broughton analyzes the argument the sentence refers to as follows:

1. If I raise a doubt whether I have an idea of God, I must grant that I doubt.
2. But if I grant (recognize) that I doubt, then I have an idea of God.
3. So if I raise a doubt whether I have an idea of God, I must grant that I have an idea of God. (148)

My main objection to Broughton's analysis is this: I see no trace in Descartes of the claim that he is doubting that he has an idea of God and so I don't see him using the specific argument this instance of the schema ascribes to him. And I am puzzled that Broughton schematizes the argument in this way in view of her own observations. On p. 144 she writes that the arguments for God's existence in the Third Meditation rely on the following premise: 'I exist and have an idea of God.' From there Descartes argues that God exists. And she elaborates: to make his argument for God's existence work 'he must be able to say that he is absolutely certain that he has precisely this idea [of God]' and that 'this idea is one that he could not have constructed simply from materials that he presents to himself in self-reflection, for otherwise he would himself be an adequate cause of his having the idea' (146). This approach seems exactly right: Descartes starts with the claim that he has an idea of God, and *then raises the question what the origin of this idea is*. But this is different from the schema, which suggests that Descartes does not start with the premise that he has an idea of God, but that he starts by doubting that he has an idea of God.⁸

8 There is some ambiguity in Broughton's statements on this issue: sometimes she suggests that he uses a dependence argument to arrive at the claim that he has 'an idea of a being of infinite perfection' (106). On p. 146 she writes that he is trying to

In the Third Meditation itself, Descartes leads us to the dependence argument in the following way. In his attempt to establish the existence of something other than himself, he examines the ideas he finds in his mind to see whether any of them must originate from something other than himself, that is, his own mind. All of them can in principle come from himself, he argues, except the idea of God. And in developing his argument for God's existence from this idea, he argues that the idea of God must be prior to the idea he has of himself as an imperfect being, and that it is not possible for him to arrive at the idea of God by negating the finite.

Now Descartes does use a dependence strategy: he argues that a condition for my having a conception of myself as a doubting, that is, imperfect, being, is that I have a conception of a perfect being, God. But he is not using this line of thought to address the question whether he has an idea of God. Rather he is responding to a view about the *origins* of this idea, the view that 'just as my conceptions of rest and darkness are arrived at by negating movement and light, so my perception of the infinite is arrived at not by means of a true idea but merely by negating the finite' (AT VII 45/CSM II 31). Descartes's argument is meant to establish that, contrary to this reasoning, the idea of God is presupposed by one's conception of oneself as doubting, and so precedes it. But that argument does not fit into Broughton's interpretation. Philosophically speaking, one *could* do what she proposes: one could argue that one has a conception of God by trying to doubt that one does, and then find that this does not work, because it is implied by one's conception of oneself as doubting. But I don't see this line of thought in Descartes.

In reply Broughton has suggested that this interpretation leaves a question unanswered: why does Descartes feel entitled to say that he has the relevant idea of God?⁹ That is an interesting question. But nothing I know of in Descartes suggests that, as Broughton would have it, he would answer that question by means of the dependence argument she

establish that he is 'absolutely certain that he has precisely this idea,' which could mean that he has an idea of God as a being of infinite perfection, or its meaning could be explained by what she says next: 'he must be able to say that this idea is one that he could not have constructed simply from the materials that he presents to himself in self-reflection.'

9 My understanding of Broughton's views has benefited greatly from a Pacific APA author-meets-critic session on her book (San Francisco, March 2003), in which I participated. When I cite her replies to objections they are taken from the written copy of her presentation in the session. I am also grateful for further correspondence after the session.

ascribes to him, although I think this is a philosophically interesting suggestion. Perhaps Broughton is inclined to think that Descartes uses the dependence argument for both issues, while I am not inclined to accept it, because she sees the dependence strategy as generally more prominent than I do. But it is important to note that in the Third Meditation Descartes seems to assume without argument that we have all sorts of ideas, ideas of various types of corporeal qualities, the idea of substance etc.

In sum, I think the textual evidence supports ascribing a dependence argument to Descartes for his view of the origins of the idea of God (and thus for God's existence) but not for our having such an idea in the first place. More generally, I think one cannot fit the dependence arguments into the Indubitability Schema because they do not typically have the form of considering doubting that *p*, then finding that this doubt is incoherent, so *p* can't be doubted and is certain. They do fit a much more general form: I engage in doubting some proposition(s), then find that the act of engaging in this doubt requires that some particular proposition must be true. And the list of 'suggestive texts' Broughton cites in support of her ascription of the dependence arguments to Descartes do indeed support ascribing this approach, but not the more specific Indubitability Schema.

Let me pursue this line of questioning further by turning to the Second Meditation. Broughton again cites a retrospective passage from the Fourth Meditation as support for her view:

[During] these past few days I have been considering whether anything in the world exists, and I have realized that *from the very fact of my considering this* it follows quite evidently that I exist. (AT VII 58/CSM II 41, emphasis Broughton's)

This passage supports ascribing the dependence strategy to Descartes, but it does not support ascribing to him specifically the strategy of considering doubting his own existence, and then concluding that that cannot be done, as the Indubitability Schema requires. And this is also true for the relevant passage from Meditation II:

I have convinced myself that there is absolutely nothing in the world, no sky, no earth, no minds, no bodies. Does it now follow that I too do not exist? No: if I convinced myself of something then I certainly existed. But there is a deceiver of supreme power and cunning who is deliberately and constantly deceiving me. In that case I too undoubtedly exist, if he is deceiving me; and let him deceive me as much as he can, he will never bring it about that I am nothing so long as I think that I am something. So after considering everything very thoroughly, I must finally conclude that this proposition, *I am, I exist*, is necessarily true whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind. (AT VII 25/CSM II 16-17)

Descartes asks himself whether from the doubts that he had raised previously, he should conclude that he also does not exist. And he argues that he should not. But he describes these doubts as follows: he had convinced himself (as a skeptical device) that there is absolutely nothing in the world, no sky, no earth, no minds, no bodies. And he concludes that he exists on the basis of the idea that 'a deceiver of supreme cunning' is deceiving him: but that deception focused on the items listed before, not on himself.

Broughton herself writes: 'Here Descartes is identifying his existence as a condition of his having carried out the intellectual activity he described in the First Meditation' (116). I agree: but in the First Meditation Descartes did not doubt his own existence! And then she follows up this comment with a schematization that does involve doubting one's own existence. So again I found myself agreeing with the philosophical analysis, but remained unconvinced by the deployment of the Indubitability Schema.¹⁰

In her response Broughton noted that doubt about everything suggests *a fortiori* doubt about the existence of the self. And more generally, she explains her use of the Indubitability Schema by saying that it accounts for the special sense in which various propositions are indubitable. What this means, in my view, is that a philosophical elaboration on Descartes's texts may result in the strategy she ascribes to him. This is interesting. And of course Broughton herself is careful to point out that her focus on and interest in the strategy of exploring conditions for the possibility of doubt is at least sometimes different from Descartes's own: 'I want to concede at once, however, that Descartes does not reflect a great deal upon this strategy or treat it as being itself a topic of philosophical interest, nor does he advert to it everywhere we might expect, or want, him to' (104). Part of my concern is that it would have been good to make more explicit where the textual evidence runs out, and where a further development of Descartes's thought is taking place. And that concern derives from an interest in seeing just what Descartes was up to, as opposed to philosophical implications or elaborations of his thought. One question we might want to ask ourselves is this: Did Descartes ask himself the questions we ask him? For instance, did he think he needed

10 The sentence that best fits Broughton's schema in this passage comes at the end of the passage: 'I am, exist, necessarily is true whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind' (AT VII 25/CSM II 17). But this sentence allows for all sorts of views of the connection between conceiving I exist and the certainty that I do. Broughton sees this statement as a conclusion based on the previous reasoning, and that reasoning does not focus on doubts about the self existing.

to justify his claim that we have an idea of God? This issue will arise again in the next section.¹¹

III Transparency

In the Second Meditation, as Broughton explains, Descartes uses the method of doubt to develop his notion of the self in three stages: (1) he knows that he exists; (2) he is a thinking thing; (3) thinking includes a whole range of activities that belong to me. At this last stage he carves out an aspect of sensing, in particular, about which he thinks this is true. I will now turn to the second and third stages to explore the issue of knowledge of one's own mental states, the question of transparency, which Broughton brings up on several occasions.

I wish to explore the issue for two reasons. One central constituent of the usual conception of Descartes is that he was committed to transparency of the mental; we have special knowledge of our own minds. The idea of transparency comprehends various forms of knowledge, not all of which will be at issue here. But there is good reason to believe that Descartes was not committed to transparency, although this is not a simple matter.¹² Broughton's discussion bears only on occurrent mental states, and so I will not be addressing the possibility of error about or ignorance of latent items in the mind, such as innate ideas.¹³ Given this limitation, we can divide transparency roughly into two types of special knowledge: (a) when I think I am in a particular mental state, this judgment has special status. Scholars have attributed to such judgments subtly different types of special epistemic features — infallibility, incorrigibility, indubitability. (b) When I am in a particular mental state, I can't fail to notice, know this: I am, one might say, omniscient about my mental states. Broughton argues that a certain type of indubitability about our self-ascriptions is at stake, and so my discussion will focus on that version of (a).

11 Its importance was made vivid to me in recent conversation with John Carriero.

12 Both Curley and Wilson have suggested that Descartes was inconsistent on the issue, but I am not convinced. See Curley, 170-93; Wilson, 150-65.

13 It seems that an innatist like Descartes could not hold unqualifiedly that we are aware of everything that is in the mind: he is clearly committed to the idea that innate ideas are dispositions that can be actualized at some point in life. That issue I will simply leave aside.

Second, I wish to pursue the relationship between transparency and the question what purposes one emphasizes in Descartes. Broughton sees the *Meditations* as concerned with both epistemological and metaphysical purposes, but she concentrates on epistemological issues. When we focus on Descartes's attempt to defeat the skeptic, it may seem natural to read him as committing himself to a type of transparency in Meditation II: self-ascriptions of particular thoughts escape the strong skeptical arguments, and so (or because) they are be infallible, or incorrigible, or indubitable. On Broughton's approach, they are indubitable because our having the thoughts we have is a condition for the possibility of doubt. When one focuses on the metaphysics, this is less obviously tempting. It is true that sometimes Descartes's dualism has been seen as intimately connected to transparency: on that view, what distinguishes the mental from the physical is its special epistemic status.¹⁴ But Descartes's principal argument for dualism, which relies on the treatment of the mind in Meditation II, does not appeal to anything like transparency and the extensive literature on the argument reflects this fact. Thus some interpretations focus on generic claims like 'I am certain that I think,' which fall far short of a claim of certainty about specific self-attributions of thought.¹⁵ Others focus on 'I can clearly and distinctly perceive thought apart from extension.'¹⁶

Broughton's treatment is relatively brief, and my discussion will consist in part in an expansion on her views and part in criticism. First, I will argue that the escape from skepticism she attributes to Descartes does not rely on a commitment to transparency. On this particular claim

14 For instance, see McDowell, 'Singular Thought and the Extent of Inner Space' (in *Subject, Thought, and Context*, Philip Pettit and John McDowell, eds. [Oxford: Clarendon 1986], 137-68); Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1980), 54-9.

15 Norman Malcolm, 'Descartes' Proof that He is Essentially a Non-Material Thing,' in *Thought and Knowledge, Essays by Norman Malcolm* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1977), 58-84; Sidney Shoemaker, 'On an Argument for Dualism,' in Carl Ginet and Sidney Shoemaker, eds., *Knowledge and Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1983), 233-58

16 Wilson, 185-201. I have argued elsewhere that this last claim is connected to the mode-attribute relation as spelled out in the *Principles*. See my *Descartes's Dualism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1998), ch. 1.

I will assume that Descartes's definition of thought in terms of consciousness does not entail transparency. That would only be so if consciousness entailed knowledge (or knowledge of the right sort). For discussion see Daisie Radner, 'Thought and Consciousness in Descartes,' *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 26 (1988) 439-52, at 447, 449.

Broughton and I are in agreement, and so this much of my argument constitutes an elaboration on her discussion. But I will take issue with her claim that transparency, or transparency in any robust sense, *emerges from* the use of the method of doubt in the Second Meditation.¹⁷

Let me begin with the second stage of self-exploration, Descartes's argument that he is a thinking thing. Broughton writes that when Descartes contends that he knows that he is a thinking thing, he is using what she calls the Meditation I test: he rejects whatever 'implies something that he has called into doubt in the First Meditation' (122). Descartes throws out everything from his old conception of himself to retain only thinking:

I am therefore precisely only [*praecise tantum*] a thinking thing, that is, a mind, intelligence, intellect or reason, words whose significance was previously unknown to me. I am a thing that is real and that really exists; what kind of thing? I have said it: a thinking thing. (AT VII 27/CSM II 18)

She suggests that there is no reliance on a belief in transparency here, contrary to, for instance, Rorty.¹⁸ I agree: indeed, little or no transparency *could* be at stake here since Descartes simply makes the generic claim that he is certain that he thinks: he is not claiming that he knows what particular mental state(s) he is in. And while Descartes sometimes writes as if the *cogito* relies on more full-blown self-reports,¹⁹ on one occasion he explicitly denies this:

For in such a case the thought of breathing is present to our mind before the thought of our existing, and we cannot doubt that we have it while we have it. To say: "I am breathing therefore I exist" in this sense, is simply to say "I think, therefore I exist." You will find on examination that all the other propositions from which we can thus prove our existence, reduce to the same one [*reviennent à cela même*]; so that one cannot prove from them the existence of the body, that is, of a nature which occupies space, etc., but only that of the soul, i.e. of a nature that thinks.... (Letter to Renier for Pollot, April or May 1638, AT II 37-38/CSM III 98; emphasis mine.)

17 In the Pacific APA 'Author Meets Critics' symposium on the book, Broughton responded that even the weaker sense of transparency she ascribes to Descartes 'has no indispensable role to play' in the overall argument she attributes to him, and that this sense of transparency is merely 'an instructive by-product of using the method of doubt.'

18 Rorty, 124

19 See *Principles* I.9, Fifth Replies, AT VII 352/CSM II 244.

Furthermore, reflection on Broughton's reading of Descartes's reasoning to his own existence in the *Meditations* reveals that this reading implies a denial of transparency. She claims that in the *Meditations*, 'I exist' is not derived from prior certainty of 'I think.' As is well known, Descartes fails to state the *cogito* explicitly in Meditation II, but Broughton argues that his reasoning there is actually genuinely different (109-19). In her view, the certainty of 'I think' does not emerge until now, *after* the certainty of 'I exist.' At the same time, she thinks that for Descartes the indubitability of 'I exist,' which emerged previously, required that '*he must be capable of forming a specific sort of conception of the entity that "I" refers to, namely a coherent and contentful conception of the entity that excludes everything that fails the First Meditation test*' (128, emphasis Broughton's). A few lines later what Broughton says is stronger: 'So I must *have* a coherent and contentful representation of myself through which I represent myself as an entity whose existence I cannot doubt' (129, emphasis mine). On this interpretation, while Descartes establishes that he exists there is something *he relies on, a conception he has, the content of which is not clear to him*; and he thinks he needs an argument, the Meditation I test, to make this conception explicit.²⁰

More important for the issue of transparency is the third stage of self-exploration. Broughton rightly points out that when Descartes claims, at the second stage, that he knows he is a thinking thing, he proposes only a narrow notion of thinking, which is intellectual: I am a mind, intelligence, intellect, reason — *mens, animus, intellectus, ratio*. At the third stage of self-exploration Descartes offers and defends a fuller list of what is included in the category of thought, a list that includes imagination and sense perception. Broughton argues that Descartes does not here *rely on* transparency, but that the certainty of self-reports *arises from* the relationship between self-reports and the possibility of methodic doubt (136-7). Descartes specifically focuses on a defense of the idea that sense perception, or rather, an aspect of sense perception, is a form of thinking and belongs to him. Broughton thinks that he now no longer relies on the Meditation I test, but on the claim that the possibility of doubt requires that at least I seem to sense: 'carefully worded self-reports about sensing are conditions of the possibility of engaging in methodic doubt' (134). They make Meditation I doubts possible rather than merely escaping them.

20 In her APA response Broughton rightly pointed out that much of what happens in the *Meditations* is the meditator figuring out 'what actually belongs to his ideas and how to categorize them.' And this is a reason why she does not want to attribute a strong version of transparency to Descartes.

I do not agree with this aspect of the interpretation, but for our purposes this disagreement will not be central, although I will briefly discuss it below. The question is now this: If the self-ascriptions escape the doubt, or make it possible, does Descartes commit himself here to transparency of the mental? I don't think so. I will approach the issue from three different angles.²¹

(1) On various occasions Descartes's observations and arguments suggest that he is not committed to transparency since he allows for errors about one's own mental states:

For experience shows that those who are the most strongly agitated by their passions are not those who know them best, and that the passions are to be numbered among the perceptions which the close alliance of mind and body renders confused and obscure. (*Passions* 1.28)

I thought too that in order to discover what opinions [the most sensible among us] really held I had to attend to what they did rather than what they say. For with our declining standards of behavior, few people are willing to say everything that they believe; and besides, many people do not know what they believe, since believing something and knowing that one believes it are different acts of thinking, and the one often occurs without the other. (*Discourse on Method*, AT VI 23/CSM I 122)

What is this wax, which is perceived by the mind alone? It is of course the same wax which I see, which I touch, which I picture in my imagination, in short the same wax which I thought it to be from the start. And yet, and here is the point, *the perception I have of it* is a case not of vision or touch or imagination — nor has it ever been, although it seemed to be so before. It is an inspection of the mind alone, which can be imperfect and confused as it was before, or clear and distinct, as it is now, depending on how carefully I attend to what it consists in. (*Meditations*, AT VII 31/CSM II 21. Translation altered, emphasis mine)

When nothing very beneficial or harmful was happening to the body, the mind had various sensations corresponding to the different areas where, and ways in which, the body was being stimulated, namely what we call the sensations of tastes, smells, sounds, heat, cold, light, colors and so on — sensations which do not represent anything located outside our thought. At the same time the mind perceived sizes, shapes, motions and so on, which were presented to it not as sensations but as things, or modes of things, existing (or at least capable of existing) outside thought, *although it did not yet notice this difference*. The next stage arose when the mechanism of the body, which is so constructed by nature that it has the ability to

21 Broughton carefully phrases her version of transparency: she does not hold that for Descartes just any self-report emerges as indubitable, but only 'carefully worded self-reports' (134, 137). I am not sure what restrictions this qualification implies. What she explains when she introduces this phrase is Descartes's refinement of his judgment when he retreats from claiming certainty that he sees light to the claim that he *seems to see* light (134-5). But for my argument it won't be very important in what other ways she thinks the reports should be carefully worded, since I question the claim that any robust sense of transparency should be attributed to Descartes.

move in various ways by its own power, twisted around aimlessly in all directions in its random attempts to pursue the beneficial and avoid the harmful; at this point the mind that was attached to the body began to notice that the objects of this pursuit or avoidance had an existence outside itself. (*Principles* 1 71, translation altered, emphasis mine)

Descartes attributes to us errors about our passions and beliefs. And he thinks we all make mistakes when young (and really not only then!) about whether what we now call primary and secondary qualities are presented to us in our minds in the same way. But perhaps particularly relevant is the wax passage, given that it occurs in the Second Meditation itself. Descartes gradually reveals a clear and distinct perception of the wax. And this is not a case of revealing an idea that was merely latent until it has been clarified. Descartes analyzes the procedure as one where from the beginning we had a certain conception of the wax *that we relied on*; it is an intellectual perception of the wax as extended, flexible and changeable that made us judge that it was numerically the same in spite of its change in appearance when brought closer to the fire. This perception plays a role in our thinking, even though we are confused about its content and mistakenly assume it is sensory rather than intellectual.

So Descartes makes remarks that suggest a commonsensical awareness of mistakes we make about our own mental lives. But in addition, he offers analyses and arguments that suggest that the possibility of ignorance of and mistakes about our own minds is part of his own theoretical framework: he relies on it in the wax passage and uses it to explain mistakes about secondary qualities. And these sorts of passages strike me as the more interesting ones. For, whether or not sometimes Descartes may look like he believes in transparency, the more interesting question is whether his philosophical system and argumentation involve real dependence on and commitment to transparency. Given that we find in Descartes evidence of denial of transparency, we may now ask ourselves the question to what extent his argument in the third stage of self-exploration commits him to indubitability of our self-reports.

(2) Let me now turn to the metaphysical purposes Descartes has in mind. He is clearly preparing the way for his mind-body dualism here, but he is focused on what exactly is included in the mental rather than on the claim that the mind is distinct from the body. And he is developing a conception of the mind different from the Aristotelian scholastic one. For the Aristotelian scholastics, the mind is the subject of intellectual states, but not sensory states (or imagination, which for them falls in the category of the internal senses). The latter belong to the body-soul composite, or the ensouled body. Descartes's including sense perception among states of the incorporeal mind is an important innovation, and it explains why he dwells on sense perception rather than willing or

doubting.²² But as Broughton points out, of course, he wants to say an *aspect* of sensation belongs to the mind: full-blown sense perception also contains a bodily component. So he is trying to isolate that aspect of sensation. Now does doing all this require transparency? I don't think so.

To begin, the doubts in the Second Meditation that Descartes reiterates are doubts about body. Already at the end of the First Meditation that is his focus (AT VII 22-3, 24-5/CSM II 15-17). And to assign sense perception proper to the mind, it is enough if doubts about body don't generate doubts about sensing proper. That much is sufficient to generate the conceptual distinction between the mental and the physical, as Margaret Wilson put it.²³ And it is sufficient to prepare the way for Descartes's view that sense perceptions are modes of the mind and not of the body. In his technical terminology, a mode presupposes — ontologically and epistemologically — the attribute of the substance it pertains to, and so this part of Meditation II supports the idea that (an aspect, or stage of) sense perception belongs to the mind, rather than the body.²⁴ And it is enough for these purposes if while doubting the existence of body, I am certain that I have some sort of sensation. I may not be clear about what exactly it is I am sensing, or I may be wrong in my views about what I am sensing, but what matters is that I seem to sense something.

This approach may well leave one dissatisfied: if Descartes is only focusing on doubts about body, is he not limiting the force of his own skeptical arguments in an illegitimate fashion? Perhaps so, but it does not follow that really we should understand his line of reasoning as implying transparency after all, or at least not transparency in a robust sense.

(3) Before addressing this point directly, it is important to consider the examples of sense perception Descartes uses: seeing light, hearing sound, feeling heat. These examples correspond to what were known as proper sensibles. In the Aristotelian tradition a proper sensible is an object of sense that is perceived by only one sensory faculty: light or color by sight, sound by hearing, heat by touch. And Aristotle had claimed

22 And it explains why, as Broughton points out (123), earlier Descartes had not offered any argument for his claim that he is a 'mind, intelligence, intellect, reason.' For extensive discussion of the relationship of Descartes to the Aristotelians on these issues, see Rozemond, ch. 2.

23 Wilson, 75-6

24 For Descartes's conception of the relationship between substance, mode and attribute see *Principles* I.53.

that the senses do not err about their proper sensibles: 'each sense judges about its proper sensibles, and is not deceived; sight is not deceived that there is color, hearing that there is a sound. But they can be deceived about what is colored or where it is, or what makes the sound' (*De anima*, II.6 15-17).²⁵ Aquinas comments that each of the external senses 'judges about its proper sensibles and is not deceived about them; thus sight is not deceived that there is such a color [*quod sit talis color*], nor is hearing deceived about sound' (*De anima*, 384). In the *Summa* he offers more detail and introduces a caveat. He writes that the senses are never deceived about the proper sensibles except '*per accidens*': 'from the impediment of an organ as when the taste of a person with a fever judges that sweet things are bitter because the tongue is full of bad humors' (ST I.85.6).²⁶

Suárez has a detailed discussion of this issue in his *De anima*, raising the question 'whether sense perception can make mistakes in its cognition.' He acknowledges the possibility of mistakes in specific judgments about proper sensibles: 'just as sight can be mistaken when it judges that something has a particular size when it is larger, so also it can be mistaken when it judges that it is of such and such a color when its color is different.' But he is optimistic about generic claims: 'a sensory power cannot be mistaken about its own proper sensible [*circa sensibile proprium adaequatum*], just as sight cannot be mistaken when it judges that something is colored, nor hearing when it judges that there is a sound' (*De anima* III.X.2).²⁷ So sight can't be mistaken about sensing color, but it can be mistaken about sensing a particular color. In addition, the senses can make mistakes, Suárez writes, about so-called accidental sensibles: that is, in the case of sight, the things that have colors — grass, tulips, the sky — and that are sensed by way of our being affected by colors.²⁸

25 I have used the Moerbeke Latin translation of *De anima*, which was widely used by Descartes's scholastic predecessors and can be found, for instance, in Aquinas' commentary.

26 The references are to Aquinas, *In Aristotelis librum de anima commentarium*, Angelo M. Pirota, ed. (Turin: Marietti 1948), and *Summa theologiae* (New York: Blackfriars and McGraw-Hill 1964-). For the *Summa* I use the standard procedure of referring by part, question, and if needed, number of objection.

27 Francisco Suárez, *De anima*, in *Opera omnia*, vol. III (Paris: Vivès 1856).

28 This view was quite standard. See also Eustacius of St Paul, *Summa philosophica quadripartita* (Paris: Carolus Chastellain 1609) III, 347; Coimbra Commentators, *Commentarii in tres libros de anima Aristotelis Stagiritae* (Lyons, 1604), 192. Eustacius offers the following caveat: 'Since error, properly speaking, belongs to judgment — of which there is none in the senses — a sensory power can be said to err only in the

Now I can't imagine that Descartes didn't choose the examples in question deliberately, given that they are examples of proper sensibles. The examples vary somewhat in how specific they are: sensing heat is more specific than hearing noise [*strepitum*], although perhaps Descartes had in mind sensing temperature. And he speaks of seeing light, whereas the Aristotelians focused on color in their discussion of sense perceptions that can't be mistaken. But this difference may be explained as follows. Another relevant notion in this context was the notion of the adequate object of a sensory power, the object that the sensory power is suitable to know. And the Aristotelians asked themselves what is the adequate object of sight: light or color (Suárez, *De anima*, III.XVI.1)? Suárez opts for light, offering a complex discussion about the nature of their relationship (*De anima* III.XVI.6).²⁹ And in favor of the certainty of sensory judgments about proper sensibles he cites the argument that a sensory power cannot be wrong about its adequate object. So in light of this consideration (certain kinds of) judgments about either color or light would be immune to error.

So it strikes me as significant that Descartes does not suggest that you can be certain that, say, you seem to see a red garment or seem to hear the sound of the crackling fire, say. And I imagine what he had in mind was this: you might think that you can't be mistaken in thinking that you see light etc., the most certain type of sensory judgments as an Aristotelian would have it. But what if you're dreaming or some very powerful being makes you believe in a physical world that does not exist? That suggests that what instead all you might be incapable of making a mistake about is that you *seem* to be seeing light, hearing noise and feeling heat.

sense that it induces into error a superior power to which judgment does pertain.' Suárez' discussion of common sensibles, which coincide with the modern category of primary qualities, is complex. For instance, he writes that sight can't be mistaken about something having size, or shape taken generally, while it can be mistaken about what particular size or shape an object has. But sight can be mistaken about other common sensibles even taken in general (*De anima* III.X.3): these include rest, motion, number (see Anneliese Maier, 'Die Mechanisierung des Weltbilds im 17. Jahrhundert' in *Zwei Untersuchungen zur Nachscholastischen Philosophie* [Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura 1968] 13-67, at 17).

29 In addition, it seems easy to imagine that Aristotelians who held that light is not what is seen but what makes sight possible would accept strong claims about the certainty of the judgment that I see light as well as the judgment that I see color. And the claim that I seem to have a perception of light is a very generic claim about which it is easy to see that one might think it's not susceptible to mistakes, unlike, say, the claim that I seem to see a lavender tulip.

This approach offers a rather different perspective on what Descartes is up to from the usual kind of perspective. The usual perspective — or rather the version thereof Broughton endorses, which is formulated in terms of indubitability as opposed to, for instance, incorrigibility — holds that he is striking for holding a strong *positive* view about the level of certainty of a particular type of knowledge, our knowledge about our own mental states. But we can now see Descartes's retreat from certainty that 'I see light, hear noise, feel heat' to 'I seem to see, hear, become warm' as follows: he is *limiting* the range of certainty in relation to the Aristotelian background, the range of what we don't make mistakes about, because he offers a more modest claim than the Aristotelians were inclined to make.³⁰

So there are several reasons for doubting that Descartes is committing himself to indubitability for our judgments about our mental states in

30 One might object that merely making the point about the proper sensibles is not enough to offer a full defense of the mental nature of (an aspect of) sense perception, since it includes more than just proper sensibles. Surely Descartes aims to include (an aspect of) *all* sense perception?

Now first of all, it might simply be natural to assume that the representations of all sensory contents have the same ontological status so that an argument about proper sensibles should generalize accordingly. But let me also propose the following, rather speculative line of thought. As Descartes and at least some scholastics agree, sense perceptions proceed as a result of the sensing subject being affected by proper sensibles. In the Sixth Replies Descartes divides sense perception into three grades. The first grade is the physical component. The second grade of sensation, which is the first mental grade, includes 'perceptions of pain, pleasure, thirst, hunger, colors, sound, taste, smell, heat, cold, and the like' (AT VII 437/CSM II 294). This list includes proper sensibles (as well as objects of inner sensation, which I will leave aside), but not common sensibles. The third grade includes judgments about common sensibles, about the size, distance and shape of the object. So the perceptions of proper sensibles initiate the mental component of the process of sense perception.

Suárez expresses a view similar to Descartes. He writes that the proper sensibles are distinguished from common sensibles because the former, but not the latter imprint their own species, or change (*immutare*) the subject (see his *De anima* III.8.1). (This view was not universal, however. Some thought the common sensibles also imprint species on the external senses, others that they imprint on the *sensus communis*. For discussion, see Maier, 16-26.) On this view again, sense perception begins with proper sensibles: they are what produces the changes in the sensing subject that give rise to sense perception.

Thus sensation of proper sensibles is more likely to be physical than other components of sense perception Descartes wishes to assign to the mental: it is what's closest to the physical part, aspect, grade of sense perception on Descartes's view, its immediate effect. Consequently, in this context, it is most important to argue that sensations of proper sensibles are mental, and perception of common sensibles will follow.

Meditation II. First, elsewhere he allows for mistakes in such judgments. And given that his examples in his discussion of sense perception all concern proper sensibles, we cannot assume that Descartes would be willing to generalize certainty about our mental states from the judgments about proper sensibles to certainty for all claims about what we seem to sense (or otherwise think or experience). Indeed, his allowance for error in this arena in other contexts suggests not.

Furthermore, I have pointed out that Descartes is intent to argue that such claims are unaffected by the doubts about body he invokes here, which is important for his dualism. But this does not mean that they are utterly certain and indubitable. My doubts about body don't generate doubts about my having a sensation. But I can doubt whether what I seem to feel is an itch or a pain. Perhaps there is no appearance-reality distinction here, but perhaps I can have trouble analyzing, labeling, making a judgment about my mental state. If I think you are putting a knife to my throat, I may mistake a sensation of cold for the pain caused by a cut.

Focus on Descartes's aim of developing his conception of the mind does not lead to an ascription of transparency, merely immunity to doubt about body. How about Broughton's own approach, which focuses on epistemological questions? Recall that her view is that Descartes asserts self-reports as indubitable because they are conditions for the possibility of doubting their contents. If Descartes is arguing that self-reports make doubt possible, must it be the case that these self-reports, when phrased to avoid commitment to the bodily component, are entirely indubitable and error-free?

Now it does seem true that in order to make sense of the doubt, I must assume self-reports. For instance, the coherence of particular skeptical scenarios (the possibility that I am dreaming, or that a demon deceives me) requires that I seem to have sensory experiences. But does it now follow that the detail of such self-reports, the details of what exactly we seem to sense, cannot be subject to error or doubt? I don't see why this should be so. And so on Broughton's approach only quite a narrow range of self-reports emerges as indubitable. Consequently, her approach results in a rather weak version of transparency, a version so weak that it seems to me that not enough is left to warrant the label 'transparency.'

Finally, one question we might ask ourselves is this: we may be inclined to approach Descartes either assuming that he was committed to some version of transparency about the mental or asking the question whether he was. But was this question on Descartes's mind?

This issue bears on Broughton's view about the reasoning Descartes uses to arrive at the claim that it is certain that I seem to 'see light, hear sound, feel heat.' Broughton argues that Descartes relies on the idea that self-reports are conditions for the possibility of doubt (132-8). I think it

is true that philosophically speaking the skeptical scenarios presuppose some sort of self-reports. But I think that Descartes does not rely on that line of thought; rather he seems to be pointing out simply that the self-reports escape the skeptical doubts, what Broughton calls the Meditation I test. This is one occasion where I do not agree with Broughton's suggestion that Descartes is pursuing the strategy of unearthing conditions for the possibility of doubt.³¹

In response, Broughton has suggested (among other things) that her view explains why Descartes feels entitled to claim indubitability for the self-reports.³² The Meditation I test, on the other hand, leaves one with the question *why* he thinks that the self-reports escape the doubts; why couldn't the very powerful being Descartes envisions deceive us about them? And in Meditation III he seems to think he is entitled to all sorts of claims about the mental; a classification of ideas, and a series of specific claims about what ideas we have and about which he then asks whether they lend themselves to proving the existence of something external to the mind. What is Descartes's ground for thinking that these claims escape the skeptical doubts? If we follow Broughton's lead, they are conditions for the possibility of doubt. But while I think she is right that some fairly generic types of self-reports are a condition for the possibility of doubt, I don't see how this requirement can explain the full range of claims Descartes seems so confident he can make about the mental in the Third Meditation.

In addition, this response presupposes that Descartes considered seriously the possibility that the demon could deceive us about our mental states, and I am not sure he did. As Margaret Wilson notes, Descartes does not defend his self-reports explicitly against the Deceiver Argument (75). And I am inclined to agree with her suggestion that he simply does not give 'the Deceiver Hypothesis the full force that seems, logically, to be implicit in it' (152). But this suggestion brings us back to the question what Descartes's focus was: a preoccupation with skepticism and certainty or with other metaphysical and epistemological purposes? The latter perspective fits more comfortably with the suggestion that he failed to give the skeptical arguments their full force. On this perspective his aim is to use it to develop his dualism, his conception of the physical world, the eternal truths and his preference for the intellect over the

31 At this point it might be instructive to compare Descartes's discussion with those found among others engaged in examinations of skepticism in his period. This is a comparison Broughton did not pursue, and that goes beyond the scope of this paper.

32 Broughton offered this response in her presentation in the APA author-meets critic session.

senses. And his discussion of self-reports in Meditation II is aimed at developing his dualism more than the refutation of skepticism.

Furthermore, I have emphasized that in relation to the Aristotelian scholastics Descartes is restricting the range of certainty rather than making a claim that stands out because of its assertiveness about certainty. And the range of examples of self-reports for which he offers certainty is very narrow. This historical perspective makes it plausible that he did not go even further and consider the possibility of deception about this minimal set of claims, and perhaps that he did not seriously consider the possibility of systematic deception about the mental, thus undercutting this rationale for Broughton's interpretation.

My suggestion is not that Descartes assumed that our knowledge of (some of) the mental is indubitable or infallible or incorrigible. Rather I mean to suggest that he failed to shine the light of skeptical inquiry on the mental and did not subject the question of our knowledge of our own minds to the kind of critical examination that he did apply to our knowledge of, say, the physical world. This is not to say he thought knowledge of the mental was flawless, but that examination of the levels of certainty of that type of knowledge was not his focus and not part of the task of the method of doubt.

The issue of transparency of the mental in Descartes merits further discussion than I have been able to offer. I have argued that the discussion of the mental in Meditation II does not warrant ascribing a robust form of transparency to Descartes. And I have suggested that he did not apply the Deceiver Hypothesis to the contents of our minds. But that leaves wide open what his views were about one's knowledge of one's own mind. And while I have raised questions about Broughton's treatment of this issue, and about her treatment of Descartes's refutation of skepticism, I hope that my discussion of her book illustrates that it is a rich, interesting and very stimulating contribution to the literature on Descartes.

MARLEEN ROZEMOND
University of Toronto
Toronto, ON
Canada M5S 1A1

