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The Ontology of Ideas and the Intentionality Thesis

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Abstract

This dissertation looks at the ontology of ideas as a philosophical paradigm. It traces the ontology from its origins in Descartes to its adoption by the British Empiricists through to the writings of Frege and Moore. It argues that the ontology is unable to provide an object category independent of the subject with the consequence that all objects that fall within the ontology are subjective. An ontology of subjective objects cannot adequately account for external reality since it cannot account for difference and otherness. The 'problem of the external world' to which this ontology gives rise, attests to this. I argue that the intentionality thesis served as a corrective to the ontology of ideas by providing a metaphysic that could account for these elements and that allowed for an adequate treatment of external or corporeal objects.

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