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The Ontological Argument for Colombian Narcoguerrillas in United States (US) Anti-Drug Programs

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Abstract . This article describes some conceptual fallacies in US anti-drug programs towards Colombia.

In the history of Western philosophy, one recurring Issue has been the quest to establish how knowledge is different from belief, as when Descartes, among others, posited that knowledge constitutes a belief that is true and is justified without any rational doubt. St. Anselm's ontological argument for the existence of God given the belief in God is an example of Descartes' conception of knowledge and proceeds as follows. (1) God is something that something greater than is not conceivable. (2) If God is conceived as in (1) but as not existing, then something greater than God must be responsible for God not existing. (3) If the God in (2) exists, this God is not God at all, because of its conception in (1). (4) Therefore, the essence of God necessitates God's existence. In other words, belief in God necessarily leads to this belief being justified without rational doubt and, thus, to knowledge that God exists.

The problem with the ontological argument is that it may erroneously conflate essence with existence. As Kant has explicated, there is no difference in essence between real and imaginary units of currency, but a huge difference in existence between the two. Or as Sartre has posited, humans exist in a world without meaning--i.e., without essence, save, perhaps, for the essence of nothing. And as many other philosophers have written, existence is not a property similar to shape, color, function, structure, and so on. A forensic psychiatrist might add that for established political authority to necessarily conflate essence with existence is to disestablish the nosological entity of paranoia.

In the history of US anti-drug efforts towards Colombia, variants of the ontological argument have been used so that the difference in essence between narcoguerrilla and non-narcoguerrilla necessitates the existence of the difference. For example, US aid for Colombian police and military authorities to combat illicit-drug trafficking is not supposed to be used for counter guerrilla operations but may be used against guerrillas if they are involved in supporting illicit-drug trafficking. The variants of ontological argument proceed as follows. (1) The difference between narcoguerrilla and non-narcoguerrilla is such that no difference is not conceivable. (2) If the difference conceived as in (1) does not exist, something different than this difference must exist to deny this difference. (3) If the difference conceived in (2) exists, it is not the difference at all because of its conception in (1). (4) Therefore, the essence of the difference in (1) necessitates in existence, and so on.

This sort of definitional process, often unconscious or, at least, implicit, is resistant to arguments that all Colombian guerrillas support illicit-drug trafficking in some way--protecting areas of cultivation and refineries, weakening the legal authorities through challenging legal authority. Even the money extorted by guerrillas from traffickers is used to subvert constituted authority.

Similar ontological arguments are employed to conveniently conflate essence and existence as to differences in being among government, licit business, illicit trafficking, and guerrilla authorities--i.e., to discount the existence of some of the same people being members of all four concepts. As is apparent, one does not need to ingest psychoactive drugs to see and count angels dancing on the head of a pin or

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to allow fantasy to guide one's behavior. (See Flaskas, C. (1995.) Postmodernism, constructionism, and the idea of reality: A contribution to the 'ism' discussions. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 16, 143-146; Grossman, L. (1996.) "Psychic reality" and reality testing in the analysis of perverse defenses. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 77, 509-517; Grosz, S. (1996.) Multidisciplinary perspectives on the concept of psychic reality. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 77, 359-366; Schemo, D. J. (October 25, 1997.) U.S. is to help army in Colombia fight drugs but skeptics abound. *The New York Times*, pp. A1; A6.) (Keywords: Drug Trafficking, Narcoguerrilla, Typology.)