

# The use of examples as a methodological mistake in the ontological argument

## El uso de los ejemplos como error metodológico en el argumento ontológico

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DOI: 10.32870/sincronia.v30.n89.e0307**Abstract.**

The history of the ontological argument is shrouded in controversy, one of which is the use of examples, as a methodological error, to demonstrate and elucidate the essence and existence of God. However, rather than clarifying this controversy, it ends up hindering the argumentation of both defenders and opponents of this argument. Therefore, the objective and interest of this paper was to demonstrate that the examples used in the ontological argument are counterproductive. To this end, we analysed the most important examples in the history of the ontological argument, based on the Hegelian triad as a method. In effect, we divided the paper into three sections: I- the "lost island" in Anselm (as opposed to Gaunilo); II- the "triangle as an example" in Descartes (as opposed to Kant) and III- concerning the "100 thalers" in Kant (as opposed to Hegel); We also add an underlying Hegelian triad in each section, plus a conclusion of everything discussed. Consequently, based on the triadic analyses, we conclude that the examples are counterproductive, as they end up falling into subjectivity and, therefore, comparing and judging God as any finite thing in the world.

**Keywords:** Exemplification. Ontological argument. Metaphysics. Via negativa.**Resumen:**

La historia del argumento ontológico yace envuelta en diversas controversias, una de ellas es el uso de los ejemplos, como error metodológico, para mostrar y dilucidar la esencia y existencia divina; empero, en lugar de aclarar tal controversia, termina



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entorpeciendo la argumentación, tanto de defensores como de opositores de dicho argumento. Por lo cual, el objetivo e interés del presente escrito fue demostrar que los ejemplos utilizados en el argumento ontológico son contraproducentes. Para ello analizamos los ejemplos más importantes en la historia del argumento ontológico, basándonos en la tríada hegeliana como método. En efecto, el escrito lo dividimos en tres apartados: I- la "isla perdida" en Anselmo (en oposición a Gaunilo); II- el "triángulo como ejemplo" en Descartes (en oposición a Kant) y III- tocante a los "100 táleros" en Kant (en oposición a Hegel); así mismo añadimos, una triádica hegeliana subyacente en cada apartado, más una conclusión de todo lo expuesto. En consecuencia, se concluye con base a los análisis triádicos que los ejemplos son contraproducentes; pues terminan cayendo en la subjetividad y, por ende, comparando y juzgando a Dios como cualquier cosa finita del mundo.

**Palabras clave:** Ejemplificación. Argumento ontológico. Metafísica. Vía negativa.

## Introduction

The ontological argument is comprehensive in the history of philosophy, with several points of controversy, from Anselm of Aosta to the present day; but all these points lead to the concept of "existence". That is, every thinker, school of thought, and theoretical framework, whether for or against the argument, has a conception or definition of existence, which is therefore the touchstone of the ontological argument, which refers to the existence of God.

In fact, the great methodological error of the precursor, Anselm of Canterbury, as in all those who followed him, was to attempt to elucidate for the public, especially non-believers, the essence and therefore the existence<sup>1</sup> of God. As a result, both future defenders and opponents<sup>2</sup> misrepresented the crux of the ontological argument, that is, they ignored the main point, existence, and consequently discussed secondary or tertiary elements of the ontological argument, as we will have occasion to show.

Because, unable to prove the existence of something ineffable, in this case God, most commentators resort to examples and analogies for pedagogical purposes, in order to illustrate and clarify that existence. However, such examples end up straying further and further from the essence

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that for Anselm, the real question is not "Does God exist?" but rather "What is God?" From this, it can be understood that his works preceding the *Proslogio* are devoted to answering the second question; and once answered, he then proceeds to answer the first question, which is ultimately the touchstone of Anselmian argumentation.

<sup>2</sup> In favour: René Descartes, Baruch Spinoza, Gottfried Leibniz, Georg Hegel, Charles Hartshorne, Alvin Plantinga, Norman Malcolm, among others. Against: Saint Thomas Aquinas, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Immanuel Kant, Gottlob Frege, etc.

and divine existence, to the point of confusing such ineffability with anything finite in the world. Indeed, examples in pedagogical terms are highly recommended, as Jacqueline Russ tells us:

The task of an example is to confirm, clarify, and illustrate a concept or logical discourse, serving the concept, which must be its master. In other words, it is the concept or idea that allows us to judge the example, and not the other way around. (2001, p. 156).

That's right, the example is only an illustration of the concept, topic or problem in question; although it has been seen that in metaphysics it is not advisable to use it, rather, it is counterproductive.

That is why we are interested in this paper in demonstrating that examples are counterproductive in the ontological argument.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, our research question in this paper will be: Why is it important to remove examples from the ontological argument? To this end, we will analyse the most important examples in the history of the ontological argument, based on Hegelian dialectics as a method, since it is Hegel who manages to undo these impurities in the argument. In addition, his method is a cornerstone in his demonstration of the ontological proof and is very little known. Hence the importance of the state of the art, given the complexity of the Hegelian system.

### Thesis: a) Ontological argument

Anselm, in presenting his arguments about the essence and, therefore, the existence of God in the first chapters of the *Proslogium*, specifically in chapter 2, we can see that he did not make his argument simple; rather, he envelops it in various rhetorical elements that serve as a shield for his famous argument. However, for reasons of space, we will only address two elements.

Element one: "We believe that nothing can be conceived above you by thought. It is therefore a question of knowing whether such a Being exists, because the *fool has said in his heart: There is no God.*" (Anselm, 1952, p. 367). The first passage quoted is to properly point out the ontological argument<sup>4</sup> . Which could be summarised as follows, Anselm (1952): God is the greatest both in

<sup>3</sup> It is worth mentioning that the ontological argument has several topics that make it difficult to accept or reject, such as: the various meanings of "existence"; the priority of faith over reason, and therefore the denigration of non-believers; the word games in Anselmian rhetoric; the use of examples; etc. These elements cause the argument to be rejected, but we maintain that by removing each of these elements, the ontological argument would be more viable to discuss or accept. However, for reasons of space, in this paper we will only focus on discussing the error of using examples in the aforementioned argument.

<sup>4</sup> "Te ese aliquid quo nihil maius cogitari potest" (Anselm, 1952, p. 366).

thought and in reality, and incomparable, therefore unique. His non-existence on any plane would be incomplete and a contradiction of his essence and therefore of his existence. In general terms, that is the ontological argument.

Element two: let us review the example of the painter, which Anselm will regret having included in his argument, as it will cause misinterpretations of Anselm's argument:

For when the painter thinks beforehand about the painting he is going to make, he certainly possesses it in his intelligence, but he knows that it does not yet exist, since he has not yet executed it. When, on the contrary, he has painted it, he not only has it in his spirit, but he also knows that he has made it. (p. 367).

It is understandable why Anselm gives this example (in addition to those already mentioned), namely to show the inseparability of thought and being, and therefore that the painting is not only in the painter's mind, but also in reality. In other words, Anselmo's point was to make an analogy<sup>5</sup> with that example, to illustrate the epistemic process that needs to be carried out for divine contemplation; since, if the idea remains only in the painter's mind and is not executed in the painting, such an epistemic process is incomplete. The same reasoning, according to Anselm, applies to God, who must not only exist in the mind, but also in reality, otherwise He would be incomplete and contradictory to His essence, and there would be something greater and better than Him.

But Gaunilo<sup>6</sup> (first objection to Anselm) realised that: "the example taken from the painter who has in his mind the picture he must paint does not fit the argument in every respect [...], however, this object spoken of and conceived has no resemblance to an unpainted picture" (pp. 409-411). Anselmo did not foresee that this would be a source of criticism of his argument, since, in addition to the transfer from thinking to being, that is, the leap from representative reality to the plane of effective reality, he himself equates divine existence with that of the example of the painting and the painter.

<sup>5</sup> It is important to mention that an example is not the same as an analogy; however, in the history of the ontological argument, both supporters and opponents of this argument sometimes use them as synonyms. We do not intend to confuse the reader with this, so in the course of this paper, we are clarifying one from the other. However, all authors had the same intention of illustrating abstract ideas concerning the ontological argument, whether through examples or analogies.

<sup>6</sup> Shortly after the publication of Anselm's *Proslogium*, Gaunilo objects to some of his arguments in his writing: *Book written in favour of a fool; against the argument contained in St. Anselm's Proslogium*, by Gaunilo, monk of Marmoutier, or *Quid ad haec respondeat quidam pro-inspiente*.

Anselm responds to this in his reply<sup>7</sup>, in section VIII: "I have not used the example of a painting to demonstrate that such was the being sought. I have had no other purpose than to show" (p. 433). Anselm wants to reformulate his error, but it is too late, as Gaunilo has already noticed this methodological error.

### b) Gaunilo's "lost island"

Now, Gaunilo believes that the more attributes or predicates or realities we assign to the concept of God, the more necessary its existence becomes. Proof of this is the counterexample that Gaunilo himself gives Anselm in relation to the example of the painter's painting, namely, the 'lost island':

It is claimed, for example, that in a part of the ocean there is an island called *Lost*, because of the [...] impossibility of finding what does not exist. It is said to possess incalculable riches and delights, even more abundant than those of the *Fortunate Islands*, and it is added that, being uninhabited, it exceeds in produce all the lands inhabited by men. [...] If, with such reasoning, one wanted me to admit the existence of such an island, I would think the argument was a joke (p. 413).

Consequently, and with an excess of divine attributes postulated by Anselm, Gaunilo presented this counterexample: "in order to clarify his thinking and ridicule the position of those who uphold such proof" (Dragonetti and Tola, 2007, p. 218). This seems to work, yet Gaunilo's mistake is that he thinks that the more attributes we add (especially existence) to the divinity, the more solid its existence will be.

### c) "The lost island never found"

Indeed, given the presentation of Anselmian syllogisms in the *Proslogium*, divine attributes (especially moral ones) were highly questioned, generally taking two approaches: 1- That all attributes converge in such a way as to support God, that is, as if all divine attributes were placed and divine existence were derived from them, that is, having existence not as a cause, but as an effect. 2- The idea is similar to that of strand number 1, but now 'existence' is an attribute and is given priority over the other attributes, sometimes even being placed as 'perfect existence', in short, 'perfect existence' as the

<sup>7</sup> *Apology of St. Anselm against Gaunilo or Quid ad haec respondeat editor ipsius libelli.*

cause. However, many of these future interpretations will be erroneous, because according to Anselm:

[...] if someone, supposing an [...] island called *Lost* because [...] of the impossibility of finding it, added that there can be no doubt about its existence [...]. But it is evident that what is such that nothing greater can be imagined cannot be supposed not to exist, because it exists by virtue of a sure and true reason; otherwise, it would not exist. (1952, pp. 423-425).

Consequently, Anselm tells us that true existence is only in God, since its very concept is intrinsic to its existence, solely and exclusively in him, and not in anything else, such as a lost island, despite being perfect and fruitful: "The infinitely perfect island cannot compete in this respect with 'that than which nothing greater can be conceived'; its being-as-such cannot provide any credential of legitimacy, [...] the island, by its very nature, is a limited being" (Martínez, 2004, p. 12). Naturally, or in other words, Pérez De Laborda reaffirms the point in question: "the key to the development of the proof [...] is the reason why the same proof is not applicable to other things; for example, to the Lost Island or to the *maiis omnibus*, as Gaunilo claims." (Pérez, 1995, p. 226). In effect, Gaunilo distorted the ontological proof, so divine existence is not due to the accumulation of attributes, it is the very essence of God<sup>8</sup>; and its essence, as unique in its kind, is only in God and, therefore, also its existence:

This is because an island is one of the things found in nature. For example, consider a number in nature. No matter how large a number is, it is always possible to add another number to it (+1). Similarly, it is possible to add a tree or some grains of sand to an island. However, it is not possible to add such additions to the perfection of God.

[This is because an island is an element present in nature. For example, consider a number in nature. No matter how large a number is, it is always possible to add another number (+1). Similarly, it is possible to add a tree or some grains of sand to an island. However, it is not possible to add such additions to the perfection of God.] (Dina and Himan, 2023, p. 6).

<sup>8</sup> In short, that is Anselm's thesis in the *Monologion*: to demonstrate the divine essence and, once demonstrated, to understand divine existence.

Truly, hence the importance of the divine concept, presented by Anselm, that there is nothing above or greater (*maius*) or better (*melius*) than the divine conception; on the other hand, finite things can always be altered or corrupted in their very nature.

### Antithesis: a) The Cartesian triangle

In the same vein as Anselm's methodological error in his argument, Descartes does the same in his demonstration of the existence of God in the fifth metaphysical meditation. Even with his 'methodical doubt', Descartes was undoubtedly familiar with the work of St Anselm, which did not make him realise the same methodological error as Anselm, pointed out by Gaunilo, namely:

[...] I find evidence that existence cannot be separated from the essence of God, just as the magnitude of its three angles, which equal two right angles, cannot be separated from the essence of a right-angled triangle, or the idea of a valley cannot be separated from the idea of a mountain. (Descartes, 2014, p. 50).

On the one hand, the first line of the above quotation is intended to point out the ontological argument in Descartes, who follows the same path of essentialism already presented in Anselm; but Descartes is more systematic, by virtue of the 'Cartesian doubt'.

On the other hand, the rest of the quotation is intended to point out Descartes' methodological error in giving the example of the triangle and the mountain, where Anselm's intentions may be the same<sup>9</sup>. Descartes uses the analogy of the mountain and the triangle to reinforce the union of essence and existence in God, but in the mountain with the valley and the triangle with its angles. We consider these examples unnecessary, given that the argument is self-evident (*per se*), in addition to being presented in thought, in accordance with the structure of the ontological argument.

### b) The triangle as an analytical judgement in Kant<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Even though Descartes' mathematical reasoning remains analogous examples for demonstrating the existence of God.

<sup>10</sup> Anselm and Descartes had something in common in the publication of their works: in Anselm's case, he faced immediate objections from some contemporary thinkers, such as Gaunilo, and as a result, Anselm had the opportunity during his lifetime to respond and restructure his argument. In Descartes' case, he sent his writings to the most brilliant minds of his time for them to analyse his work, so that he would have the opportunity to respond. This is how Descartes' works were published; more personal correspondence that will help us to understand his thinking better. For this very reason, it was easy for us to place Anselm vs Gaunilo under the

Kant analysed the ontological argument, especially that of Descartes and Leibniz, and saw certain weaknesses in the argument; one of them concerns the example of the triangle presented by Descartes:

To posit a triangle and then remove its three angles is contradictory; but to remove the triangle together with its three angles is no contradiction at all. Exactly the same thing happens with the concept of an absolutely necessary being. | // If you remove its existence, you remove the thing itself with all its predicates (Kant, I. *KrV*. B 622-623/A 594-595)<sup>11</sup> (Kant, 2011, p. 547).

Evidently, what Kant is telling us is that the concept of God is not the same case as the triangle, as an analytical judgement. That is, it is contradictory if I remove the angles (predicate) from the triangle (subject); the same should happen if I remove attributes such as omniscience, perfection, existence, among others (predicates) from God (subject). And if I remove the subject with all its predicates, there is nothing to contradict. However, in the case of God, these scenarios are contradictory. Nevertheless, this is no longer possible in Kantian philosophy, as is the case with all traditional metaphysics. In short, we have seen that the use of examples is inadequate in the ontological argument, and we are not alone in this view; Rogelio Rovira also argues this in his work, *La fuga del no ser* (*The Escape from Non-Being*), (1991):

Descartes, in fact, often compares the necessity of God's being, which his reasoning seeks to prove true, with the necessity of geometric relationships. But if the aim is to show that existence necessarily corresponds only to the divine essence because it is unique among all essences, then it is easy to understand that any example adduced as an illustration of that truth must be insufficient and imperfect. [...]. Thus, these examples, or others of a different

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Hegelian triad, as there is an affirmation (Anselm), a negation (Gaunilo) and a synthesis (Anselm's reply). In the case of Descartes, it is similar to that of Anselm, so the Hegelian triad we want to show is clear and natural, and not an argumentative whim on our part. In addition, Gassendi's immediate objections stand out, but despite this, we chose to use Kant's objection, as it is known to be a more elaborate, structured and well-known system compared to Gassendi's. In addition, the latter makes the same mistake as Gaunilo, that is, he contradicts himself, since he objects that existence is not a perfection and is not deducible from essence, but Gassendi admits that in the mountain we can verify it in reality and in the case of the triangle a geometric demonstration can be given (as Kant will do). Therefore, Gassendi ends up equating or surpassing the concept of finite things with the divine concept. For this reason, we opt for Kant's objections.

<sup>11</sup> We will proceed with the official quotations from Kant and Hegel, together with the APA seventh edition format for greater precision in the quotations.

nature, rather than helping us to understand and accept the immediate evidence of the truth stated in the proposition 'God exists', may give rise to serious misunderstandings. (Rovira, 1991, p. 69).

Indeed, we see once again the complaint, in this case by Rovira, about the use of examples in the Cartesian ontological argument. Although Rovira refers to the Cartesian proof, this complaint can be applied to the entire history of the ontological argument, both by opponents and supporters, as both sides commit the same methodological error.

### c) Descartes' response<sup>12</sup>

Descartes, like Anselm, had the opportunity to respond and, therefore, to be more sensible in their respective replies<sup>13</sup>. This is the case in the section, "About the things that have been objected against the fifth meditation", in point II Descartes responds:

[...] necessary existence is truly a property of God in the least extensive sense, because it suits Him alone, and only in Him does it form part of His essence. For this reason, too, the existence of the triangle should not be compared with the existence of God, because it obviously has a different relationship with essence in God than it does in the triangle. (Descartes, 2014, p. 256).

Here, Descartes' point about the inseparability of essence and existence only and exclusively in God is indeed necessary, since what was presented in the *Metaphysical Meditations* did lend itself to misinterpretation, but now, in the Responses to Objections, he is more cautious.

Furthermore: " The geometrical propositions are necessary judgements, or in them the combination of subject and predicate is necessary for thought. The geometrical entity (the triangle), however, is not ontologically necessary. The triangle does not necessarily exist." [Geometrical

<sup>12</sup> Regarding the footnote on page 10 (of this paper) on why we chose Kant and not Gassendi, we must also say that Descartes and Kant did not coincide in the same time period, unlike Descartes and Gassendi, and therefore Descartes did not have the opportunity to respond to Kant. However, reviewing Descartes' various responses to the many objections to his writing, we found his response to Gassendi to be the most appropriate, so we chose to include those responses. We do not intend to commit an anachronism, although we do consider it pertinent to give Descartes an opportunity to respond, in addition to the fact that such a response would be what he would say to other future opponents, such as Kant.

<sup>13</sup> We have already reviewed Anselm's case; in Descartes' case, they are in his replies: *The author's response to the fifth objections raised by Mr Gassendi*.

propositions are necessary judgements, or in them the combination of subject and predicate is necessary for thought. However, the geometrical entity (the triangle) is not ontologically necessary. The triangle does not necessarily exist.] (Harrelson, 2004, p. 30). Indeed, one of the main criticisms of the ontological argument, in its various forms, is the leap, or combination, from logic to metaphysics. Despite this, the example of the triangle, presented by various opponents of the ontological proof, makes the same mistake of mixing, or transferring, but now from geometric principles to ontological ones. However, the triangle does not have this need for existence : "Nevertheless, the ontological argument seeks precisely to prove that there are subjects that cannot be suppressed" (Ferradas, 2009, p. 98). Or, rather, the ontological argument seeks only to prove a single and exclusive existence, namely, divine existence.

#### Summary: a) Kant's 100 thalers

Just as we saw that Gaunilo sees Anselm's errors in the *Proslogium*, especially the example of the painter and the painting, Gaunilo gives the counterexample of the "lost island". Kant does the same with the counterexample of the 100 thalers, in response to Descartes' triangle:

And so, what is actually real contains nothing more than what is merely possible. One hundred actually real thalers contain nothing more than [what is contained in] one hundred possible [thalers]. [...]. But there is more in my estate with the one hundred actually real thalers than with the mere concept of them (Kant, I. *KrV*. B 627-628/A 599-600) (Kant, 2011, p. 550).

In other words, in "my concept of One Hundred Thalers"<sup>14</sup> : I have 100 thalers in my pocket, but when I check my pocket, I see that this is not the case, but that I have 99 thalers, because when I put the 100 thalers in my pocket, one fell out. Or, I have 100 thalers in my pocket, but when I check my pocket, I find 101 thalers, because the last time I used it, I forgot to take that thaler out, which is now extra in my amount. In both situations, there is no correspondence between my concept and the object, because if I say: I have 100 thalers in my pocket, then there really have to be 100 thalers, and not 99 or 101 thalers, but 100 thalers.

<sup>14</sup> Silver coin used in the Prussian states at the time of Kant.

To reinforce the above, in the Kantian system, one of the basic principles is that there must be a correlation between the concept and the object in question: "Both must contain exactly the same thing" (Kant, I. *KrV*. B 627/A 599) (Kant, 2011, p. 549). Where the concept points to the object as it is. Only in this way does the concept express what the object is.

Although (for most opponents of the ontological argument) the object has greater force than the concept, since the object has an existence in itself and determines the concept, in other words: "To be qualified as existing, each content must then be able to demonstrate *a certain connection* with *certain perceptions*: from the point of view of transcendental idealism" (Cardani, 2014, p. 51). However, according to Kant, what has been done in the ontological proof is that this concept has been made the richest in attributes, the most perfect, but: "then, the question still remains whether [that entity] exists or not." (Kant, I. *KrV*. B 628/A 600) (Kant, 2011, p. 550). This is one of the main theses of Kantian philosophy, that is, to go beyond the concept, to test it in "possible experience," whether such a being exists and whether it corresponds to the concept.

### b) 100 thalers in Hegel

In Hegel's analysis of Kant's 100 thalers, he initially agrees with Kant, although he questions the concept itself. However, Hegel then goes on to ridicule Kant's example: 'The assertion that one hundred possible thalers are something different from one hundred real thalers involves a very widespread popular belief [...], what we imagine is false, the one hundred thalers we picture are purely and simply a fiction' (LHP III, p. 440) (Hegel, 1955, p. 440). On the one hand, it is an '*ad hoc*' example, i.e. very convenient for the present situation of reducing the argument to a finite judgement, in accordance with criticism. But, on the other hand, it involves many underlying elements that do not satisfy the argument, such as the acquisition and possession of the excessive hundred thalers.

Nicolai Hartmann continues with the Hegelian critique of Kant: "Kant's 'possible hundred thalers' are not really possible; to make them possible, a real process of becoming is necessary, in this case of acquisition, of work. By what right, then, are they called possible [...], here the 'one hundred thalers'?" (Hartmann, 1954, p. 133). Thus, the point we want to make is the impertinence of giving the example, in this case, of the hundred thalers, which is the description of my relative wealth, in addition to the excessive amount that an average citizen of that time could possess through prior work. Even if the

amount to be possessed were smaller, it would still be the same methodological error: equating this concept with the divine concept.

In other words: "The impropriety of the example of real or imagined coins does indeed play an important role against the Königsberg philosopher; it is true that in the Critique of Pure Reason there are many inadequate, incomplete and biased examples" (Cardani, 2014, p. 68). Certainly, Cardani tells us that this does not invalidate the critical system, but rather that the examples used there are not adequate.

Furthermore: ", the existence of both islands and thalers is contingent, whereas, for Anselm and Descartes, the existence of God is necessary. Contingent existence might – or might not – be a predicate, but necessary existence necessarily is." [The existence of both islands and thalers is contingent, whereas, for Anselm and Descartes, the existence of God is necessary. Contingent existence might be a predicate, but necessary existence necessarily is.] (Burns, 2012, p. 3). Thus, it should be remembered that the ontological proof remains on the essentialist plane, which is no longer compatible with the Kantian one.

All this led to the impossibility of positing the existence of God in experience, in the sensible world. In effect, we are talking about an incompatibility of methods on the part of the Kantian, who demands possible experience; however, God is not a finite object like other entities that can be measured with the Kantian system. Hence Hegel's criticism of such a system, which are two very different conceptions of categories; however, regardless of the methods or theoretical frameworks, anyone would see that the concept of the Divine is not the same as a pseudo-concept of 100 thalers.

### c) Aufhebung<sup>15</sup>

One of Hegel's criticisms of the Kantian system is that anything can be taken as a concept; in reality, Kantian categories are very different from Hegelian categories<sup>16</sup>, however:

<sup>15</sup> This term has several interpretations, but we have opted for one of the meanings of the synthesis of *Aufhebung*: that is, 'to leave' or 'to go towards', which are the meanings or interpretations that Xavier Zubiri gives to this German term (Zubiri, 1995).

<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that our present study is on the use of examples as a methodological error in the ontological argument; therefore, we do not intend to deal here (for reasons of space and time) with the subject of Kantian and Hegelian categories, which are very different. The former are determined with a view to the finite, in a given space and time, according to the principles of "possible experience" in criticism; unlike the Hegelian case: "For what is Logic, what is Hegel's entire system, if not the gigantic development of the idea that God, who is the set of categories, implies the existence of God, is the very reality of God?" (Gaos, 1994, p. 406).

[...] certainly, in ordinary life, a representation of one hundred thalers is called a concept. But this is not a concept, it is only a determination of the content of my consciousness [...]. But this should not be called a concept. The concept, and, of course, the absolute concept, the concept in and for itself, the concept of God, must be taken in general, and this concept contains being as determinability. (LPR I, p. 260) (Hegel, 1981, p. 260).

Hegel constantly emphasises in his philosophical system what a concept is and what it is not, especially in ordinary life, in relation to the divine concept: "(moreover, it is already quite misleading to call all evil existence [*Existenz*] a 'concept') rather, the defect of being something subjective must be eliminated from the concept" (LEEG, ¶ 6, Ac) (Hegel, 2014, p. 246). Therefore, Hegel's criticism is not only directed at the opponents of the ontological argument, but also at its supporters, since in their various ways of presenting the divine concept they subjectivise it, and therefore: "The hundred thalers are not, for Hegel, a true concept, just as the content of no other representation is" (Ferreiro, 2016, p. 97). Moreover, we are dealing with the absolute, divine concept, which is incomparable with the 100 thalers, triangle, mountain, island, unicorns and any other entity that may be mentioned:

Now, if the principle that the concept is different from being is undoubtedly accurate, God is even more different from the hundred thalers and other finite things. The *definition of finite things* is that in them the concept and being are different, that the concept and reality, the soul and the body, are separable and that, therefore, they are transitory and mortal. On the contrary, the abstract definition of God is precisely this: that his concept and his being are *inseparable* and *indivisible*. (SL, p. 83) (Hegel, 1976, p. 83).

Firstly, in finite things there is no need for correspondence between being and concept. Secondly, the concept of God is very different from the concepts of finite things. This is even more so if it is a pseudo-concept, because the divine concept's truth lies in the inseparability of being and concept: " , so that any attempt to attack the ontological argument through such a comparison would miss the entire point of the argument. " (Harrelson, 2004, p. 42). We have said repeatedly in different ways that only in God are concept and being inseparable.

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In other words, it is a whole, it is a logical pantheism (*panlogism*) in which reason and reality dissolve into one; therefore, it will be understood that both systems are very different.

Therefore, God is far from being confused and compared with finite things. However, Harrelson reaffirms: " Discussions such as that of the 'hundred dollars' are [...] irrelevant [...] they ignore the frequently and unambiguously asserted status of God as an exception to the rule. No theological conclusions are reached by means of such empirical examples. " No theological conclusions are reached by means of such empirical examples.] (p. 46). This is what we have been arguing, that such examples, rather than clarifying the discussion, hinder it.

### Conclusion

We shall conclude this paper with two points: point one, we show the methodological errors in the ontological argument, both by supporters and opponents of the ontological argument, even though their intentions may have been pedagogical. However, they end up subjectivising and comparing the divine concept with finite concepts through examples and analogies. Therefore, having shown this, we maintain that God, according to this argument, is not an object of possible experience and therefore cannot be judged or determined according to the Kantian, empirical and scientific system by means of examples or analogies.

Secondly, responding to our research question, which is: why is it important to remove the examples in the ontological argument? We demonstrate that it is important, relevant and necessary to remove the examples in the ontological argument in order to purify the argument in some way. And thus, it can, at least, be analysed in the first instance; in the second instance, it can be discussed; and in the third instance, it can be accepted or rejected on its own merits (*per se*) and not on the basis of secondary or tertiary elements, as shown in this paper through examples.

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