

## Shape

Descartes's *Meditations* advances a linear central argument from its Second Meditation's start through the Fifth Meditation's close. Impediments include the standing Cartesian Circle *Objections* that misinterpret passages in the Third and Fifth Meditations as concessions of vicious circularity. This study, in three parts, first credits the Second Meditation's opening Archimedean argument with a conclusion that can serve as an initial premise in a linear central argument. The initial premise is absent from standard interpretations that follow English and French translations and resort to interpolating so-called "*cogito* reasoning." The second part corrects the misinterpretation by the Cartesian Circle allegation that targets the Third Meditation's introductory passage. The correction answers the question why Descartes's *Replies* decline even to acknowledge that any *Objection* addresses this passage. Finally, this study credits Descartes's compressed *Reply* with relieving the misinterpretation by Arnauld's Cartesian Circle *Objection* that overlooks a problem the Fifth Meditation both confronts and solves.