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DEMONSTRATION AND BELIEF:

THE INVESTIGATION OF A DIFFERENCE

IN CLASSICAL THOUGHT

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of the requirements for the degree of

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This thesis is my own work,
except where specifically acknowledged.

Andrew Benjamin
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(Andrew Benjamin)

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ABBREVIATIONS AND FOOTNOTING

I have, within this text, attempted to keep footnotes to a minimum level of disruption. Ideas which are related, though not central, to my major concerns have been included, in brackets, in the body of the text. With regard to footnoting books, I have adopted the following procedure: if a section is devoted entirely or for the major part to a single book, then I have included only the relevant page number after a quote or reference. In those sections in which there are a number of references to various books I have either given the title and page number after the reference, or used one of the following abbreviations:

<u>AK</u>	M. Foucault, <i>The Archaeology of Knowledge</i> .
<u>BPW</u>	<i>Berkeley's Philosophical Writings</i> , ed. D. M. Armstrong.
<u>DCB</u>	<i>Descartes' Conversations with Burman</i> , introduced, with a commentary, by J. Cottingham.
<u>DPL</u>	<i>Descartes' Philosophical Letters</i> , ed. A. Kenny.
<u>HE</u>	D. Hume, <i>Enquirie Concerning Human Understanding</i> .
<u>HEW</u>	<i>Hobbes' English Works</i> . Number refers to Volume.
<u>HR</u>	<i>Descartes' Philosophical Works</i> , ed. Haldane and Ross. Number refers to Volume.
<u>HT</u>	D. Hume, <i>A Treatise of Human Nature</i> .
<u>LEHU</u>	John Locke, <i>Essay on Human Understanding</i> .
<u>OT</u>	M. Foucault, <i>The Order of Things</i> .

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis exists on two levels. It is an examination of certain topics in seventeenth century and eighteenth century philosophy, and at the same time an attempt to utilise the insights afforded by Heidegger and Foucault in the writing of the history of systems of thought. I have gone about the thesis in this way because I think there are theoretical inadequacies in most writings in the history of ideas. While I have not concerned myself to any great degree with an examination and critique of these inadequacies, I have used them as a starting point. In other words, my concern is not with these inadequacies as such. Rather, the aim of this thesis is to examine the writing of the history of philosophy by attempting to write a tiny portion of its history. This thesis is therefore a process, a means by which the act of writing becomes an examination of the possibility of writing the 'history of philosophy' itself.

In the introduction to the first chapter and in the first section of that chapter, I have attempted to establish certain problems and conditions which provide a way into the writing of the history of philosophy. The way in is not pure acceptance of certain approaches. Rather, it is an examination of what constitutes an 'approach'. The criterion used to substantiate what accounts for an 'approach' is the relationship between the approach and metaphysics. What has been argued is that central to any approach, central to the act of writing, is that the approach to metaphysics cannot be trapped within metaphysics. Rather, writing must exist in a state of diff-

erence from metaphysics. There can be no 'outside' of metaphysics, as the opposition outside/inside is part of metaphysics itself. The consequence of this is that a non-metaphysical conception of difference must be established. Hence one of the main concerns of the first chapter is this activity.

The first chapter is therefore an establishing of the means by which two paradigms of the knowing process will be examined. However, as is made clear in the first chapter, it is not the 'pure' part of a pure and applied study. Rather, what has been attempted are the pre-conditions of such a study, concentrating on an explanation of the way in which these paradigms can differ and the conception of 'text' which is at play in the establishing of a paradigm. I argue that a text is inseparable from its epistemic conditions of existence, i.e., the conditions which constitute knowledge in a given discursive practice, in terms of the rules governing the knowing process. The second section of the first chapter is an attempt to establish the epistemic conditions of existence which were at play in these centuries. However, if the text is inseparable from its conditions of existence, then the discussion of philosophical texts must take place in terms of their conditions of existence. It is for this reason too that the thesis does not divide into a pure section and an applied section. The establishing of the paradigms must take place in relation to these conditions of existence. This point is at play in chapters two and three, which are concerned with establishing the paradigms of demonstrable knowledge and the

Humean paradigm. What I attempt to show is that it is only in terms of a certain conception of identity and difference that the difference between these can be explained, and that it is only in terms of a certain conception of text that the paradigms can in fact be constructed.