

Descartes View of Substances:

“Substance is a thing which so exists that it needs no other things in order to exist.”

~ Principles I 51

(1) While the mind is something over & above the body, the body comes from Descartes' mechanistic conception of corporeal world. 2) Bodily phenomena can be accounted for simply by motion of the extended parts of individual bodies. (3) Most human behavior & all animals can be accounted for in such mechanistic, non-mentalistic terms (animals have no souls). (4) The motion of particles of matter that account for corporeal changes is mechanistic.

(1) Mind & body are 2 different, non-identical substances. This is heart of Cartesian dualism. This distinction establishes the possibility of immortality since it involves that the decay of body does not imply destruction of the mind. (2) Methodic doubt reveals to Descartes that it is clearly & distinctly conceivable that he might exist without anything bodily existing. (3) What sets us apart from animals is a certain kind of human behavior that can't be accounted for mechanistically (e.g., linguistic behavior).

God: only substance whose existence does not depend on any other.

Finite things count as substances as long as they depend on no other thing for their existence except God.

All finite things depend on God for their existence & for their continual existence - for he continuously recreates them.

Finite Substance:

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Individual bodies are substances:
Extension (spacial dimension) is the essence or **principle** attribute of each body. All of a body's other properties or attributes are simply ways of being extended.

Individual minds (or souls) are substances:
Thought is the *principle* attribute of minds. Thus, all the particular properties of the mind are simply modes of thought.

All corporeal substances have the same essence-extension

For example, "I wish I was in Nacogdoches, the oldest town in Texas."

3 Modes (properties) of a Table:

Size: **Shape:** **Motion:**

↓ ↓ ↓

5' table Round Rest,
is a not
mode. moving

Changes in corporeal substances are explain in terms of extension (and motion). They are clear and distinct ideas. He believes that we can account for all bodily phenomena in terms of extension and motion. Motion is the transference of one body from the vicinity of others bodies that are in contact with it in terms of individual bodies. God created the extended world with a certain quantity of motion (laws of nature).

Modes (properties) of this thought:

Believe: **Desire:**

↓ ↓

Believe & desire are properties that presuppose that the subject of those properties is thinking; they are modes of thought.

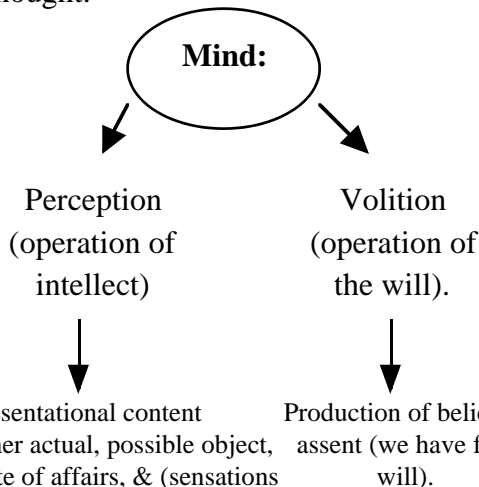
all variety in corporeal (matter) world can be understood & explain in terms of size, shape, & motion.

Color, taste, heat, cold, smell, and sound are down graded or secondary qualities).

Sometimes Descartes says we can attribute dispositions in the body to produce in us various kinds of sensory ideas.

Other qualities (e.g., taste, heat, etc) are obscure and confused. This reveals a detachment from the senses

Everything is reducible to extended matter in motion.



Representational content whether actual, possible object, & (sensations & passive mental states do represent things but do not always do accurately)

Production of belief & assent (we have free will).