Meditations on First Philosophy

RENÉ DESCARTES
1596–1650

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Meditationes de Prima Philosophia

Translated from the Latin with AI (Claude) and edited

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Meditations on First Philosophy · René Descartes (1596–1650)

Translated from the Latin with AI (Claude) and edited. Parallel-text edition, Forage, September 2026. forage.com/descartes/meditations

Latin text: Charles Adam and Paul Tannery, *Œuvres de Descartes*, vol. VII (Paris, 1904), via Latin Wikisource (la.wikisource.org/wiki/Meditationes_de_prima_philosophia_(Adam_et_Tannery)). English: translated from the Latin with AI (Claude), then edited for accuracy and consistency. Not reviewed by a human specialist. Free to reuse under CC BY-SA 4.0. Margin numbers are the standard AT page references.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1641 René Descartes published, in Latin, a short book that set out to tear down everything he believed and rebuild knowledge on a foundation nothing could shake. He wrote it as six meditations, as if over six days: first doubting whatever can be doubted, then finding the one thing he cannot doubt, and building from there to God, to truth and error, and finally to the physical world and his own body.

The phrase everyone knows, "I think, therefore I am," does not appear here in that form. It comes from his earlier *Discourse on Method*. In the *Meditations* the discovery is quieter and more exact: "I am, I exist."

The book opens with a letter to the theologians of the Sorbonne, a preface, and Descartes' own synopsis. Many readers skip straight to the First Meditation.

Dedicatory Letter

To the Faculty of Theology at Paris
Descartes asks the Paris theologians to endorse his proofs of God and the soul.

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AT 2 SAPIENTISSIMIS CLARISSIMISQUE VIRIS SACRAE FACULTATIS THEOLOGIAE PARISIENSIS DECANO & DOCTORIBUS RENATUS DES CARTES S. D.

Tam justa causa me impellit ad hoc scriptum vobis offerendum, & tam justam etiam vos habituros esse confido ad ejus deffensionem suscipiendam, postquam instituti mei rationem intelligetis, ut nullâ re melius illud hîc possim commendare, quàm si quid in eo sequutus sim paucis dicam.

Semper existimavi duas quaestiones, de Deo & de Animâ, praecipuas esse ex iis quae Philosophiae potius quàm Theologiae ope sunt demonstrandae: nam quamvis nobis fidelibus animam humanam cum corpore non interire, Deumque existere, fide credere sufficiat, certe infidelibus nulla religio, nec fere etiam ulla moralis virtus, videtur posse persuaderi, nisi prius illis ista duo ratione naturali probentur: cùmque saepe in hac vitâ majora vitiis quàm virtutibus praemia proponantur, pauci rectum utili praeferrent, si nec Deum timerent, nec aliam vitam expectarent.

Et quamvis omnino verum sit, Dei existentiam credendam esse, quoniam in sacris scripturis docetur, & vice versâ credendas sacras scripturas, quoniam habentur a Deo; quia nempe, cùm fides sit donum Dei, ille idem qui dat gratiam ad reliqua credenda, potest etiam dare, ut ipsum existere credamus; non tamen hoc infidelibus proponi potest, quia circulum esse judicarent. Et quidem animadverti non modo vos omnes aliosque Theologos affirmare Dei existentiam naturali ratione posse probari, sed & ex sacrâ Scripturâ inferri, ejus cognitionem multis, quae de rebus creatis habentur, esse faciliorem, atque omnino esse tam facilem, ut qui illam non habent sint culpandi. Patet enim Sap. 13 ex his verbis: Nec his debet ignosci.

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To the most wise and distinguished men, the Dean and Doctors of the Sacred Faculty of Theology of Paris, René Descartes sends greetings.[1]

So just a cause moves me to offer you this work, and I am confident that you too will have so just a cause for taking up its defense once you understand the plan of my undertaking, that I can recommend it here in no better way than by saying briefly what I have aimed at in it.

I have always thought that two questions, concerning God and the soul, are chief among those that ought to be demonstrated with the help of philosophy rather than of theology. For although it is enough for us who are believers to accept by faith that the human soul does not perish with the body, and that God exists, it certainly seems that unbelievers cannot be persuaded of any religion, or even of hardly any moral virtue, unless these two things are first proved to them by natural reason. And since in this life greater rewards are often held out for vices than for virtues, few would prefer what is right to what is useful if they neither feared God nor expected another life.

It is entirely true that we must believe that God exists because this is taught in the Holy Scriptures, and, conversely, that we must believe the Holy Scriptures because they come from God; for since faith is a gift of God, the same one who gives the grace to believe everything else can also give the grace to believe that he himself exists. Yet this cannot be put before unbelievers, because they would judge it to be a circle. And indeed I have noticed not only that you and all other theologians affirm that the existence of God can be proved by natural reason, but also that it is inferred from Holy Scripture that knowledge of him is easier

1 The Faculty of Theology of the University of Paris, commonly known as the Sorbonne.

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than much of what we know about created things, and is in fact so easy that those who lack it are to blame. This is clear from Wisdom 13, in these words: "Nor ought they to be pardoned."[2]

Si enim tantum potuerunt scire, ut possent aestimare saeculum, quomodo hujus dominum non facilius invenerunt? Et ad Rom. cap. I, dicitur illos esse inexcusabiles. Atque ibidem etiam per haec verba: Quod notum est Dei, manifestum est in illis, videmur admoneri ea omnia quae de Deo sciri possunt, rationibus non aliunde petitis quàm ab ipsâmet nostrâ mente posse ostendi. Quod idcirco quomodo fiat, & quâ viâ Deus facilius & certius quàm res saeculi cognoscatur, non putavi a me esse alienum inquirere.

"For if they were able to know so much that they could appraise the world, how did they not more easily find its Lord?" And in Romans, chapter 1, they are said to be "without excuse." And in the same place, by the words "What can be known of God is manifest in them," we seem to be told that everything that can be known about God can be shown by reasons drawn from no other source than our own mind. I therefore thought it not beyond my province to inquire how this comes about, and by what path God may be known more easily and more certainly than the things of the world.

Atque quantum ad animam, etsi multi ejus naturam [3] non facile investigari posse judicarint, & nonnulli etiam dicere ausi sint rationes humanas persuadere illam simul cum corpore interire, solâque fide contrarium teneri, quia tamen hos condemnat Concilium Lateranense sub Leone 10 habitum, sessione 8, & expresse mandat Christianis Philosophis ut eorum argumenta dissolvant, & veritatem pro viribus probent, hoc etiam aggredi non dubitavi.

As for the soul, many have judged that its nature [3] cannot easily be investigated, and some have even dared to say that human reasoning persuades us that it perishes together with the body, and that the contrary is held by faith alone. But since the Lateran Council held under Leo X, in its eighth session, condemns these people, and expressly commands Christian philosophers to refute their arguments and to prove the truth as far as they are able, I have not hesitated to undertake this as well.[3]

AT 3 Praeterea, quoniam scio plerosque impios non aliam ob causam nolle credere Deum esse, mentemque humanam a corpore distingui, quàm quia dicunt haec duo a nemine hactenus potuisse demonstrari: etsi nullo modo iis assentiar, sed contrà rationes fere omnes, quae pro his quaestionibus a magnis viris allatae sunt, cùm satis intelliguntur, vim demonstrationis habere putem, vixque ullas dari posse mihi persuadeam, quae non prius ab aliquibus aliis fuerint inventae: nihil tamen utilius in Philosophiâ praestare posse existimo, quàm si semel omnium optimae studiose quaerantur, tamque accurate & perspicue exponantur, ut apud omnes constet in posterum eas esse demonstrationes.

Further, I know that most impious people refuse to believe that God exists and that the human mind is distinct from the body for no other reason than that, as they say, no one has so far been able to demonstrate these two things. I do not agree with them in the least. On the contrary, I think that nearly all the reasons which great men have brought forward on these questions have the force of demonstration when they are properly understood, and I can hardly persuade myself that any can be given which have not already been discovered by others. Nevertheless, I think nothing more useful can be accomplished in philosophy than to seek out carefully, once and for all, the best of them, and to set them forth so precisely and clearly that from now on it will be established for everyone that they are demonstrations.

Ac denique, quoniam nonnulli quibus notum est me quandam excoluisse Methodum ad quaslibet difficultates

And finally, some people who know that I have developed a certain method for resolving any diffi-

2 Wisdom of Solomon 13:8–9, on those who studied the world yet failed to find its maker.

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in scientiis resolvendas, non quidem novam, quia nihil est veritate antiquius, sed quâ me saepe in aliis non infoeliciter uti viderunt, hoc a me summopere flagitarunt: ideoque officii mei esse putavi nonnihil hac in re conari.

Quicquid autem praestare potui, totum in hoc Tractatu continetur. Non quod in eo diversas omnes rationes, quae ad eadem probanda afferri possent, colligere conatus sim, neque enim hoc videtur operae pretium esse, nisi ubi nulla habetur satis certa; sed primas tantùm & praecipuas ita prosecutus sum, ut jam pro certissimis & evidentissimis demonstrationibus illas ausim proponere. Addamque etiam tales esse, ut non putem ullam viam humano ingenio patere, per quam meliores inveniri unquam possint: cogit enim me causae necessitas, & gloria Dei, ad quam totum hoc refertur, ut hîc aliquanto liberius de meis loquar quàm mea fert consuetudo.

Atqui quantumvis certas & evidentes illas putem, non tamen ideo mihi persuadeo ad omnium captum esse accommodatas: sed, quemadmodum in Geometriâ multae sunt ab Archimede, Apollonio, Pappo, aliisve scriptae, quae, etsi pro evidentibus etiam ac certis ab omnibus habeantur, quia nempe nihil plane continent quod seorsim spectatum non sit cognitu facillimum, nihilque in quo sequentia cum antecedentibus non accurate cohaereant, quia tamen longiusculae sunt, & valde attentum lectorem desiderant, non nisi ab admodum paucis intelliguntur: ita, quamvis eas quibus hîc utor, certitudine & evidentiâ Geometricas aequare, vel etiam superare, existimem, vereor tamen ne a multis satis percipi non possint, tum quia etiam longiusculae sunt, & aliae ab aliis pendent, tum praecipue quia requirunt mentem a praejudiciis plane liberam, & quae se ipsam a sensuum consortio facile subducat.

Nec certe plures in mundo Metaphysicis studiis quàm Geometricis apti reperiuntur. Ac [5] praeterea in eo differentia est, quod in Geometriâ, cùm omnibus sit persuasum nihil scribi solere, de quo certa demonstratio non habeatur, saepius in eo peccant imperiti, quod falsa

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culties whatever in the sciences—not a new one, indeed, since nothing is older than truth, but one they have often seen me use with some success in other matters—have urgently pressed me to do this; and so I thought it my duty to make some attempt in this matter.

Whatever I have been able to accomplish is contained entirely in this treatise. Not that I have tried to collect in it all the various reasons that could be brought forward to prove the same things; that does not seem worth the effort except where no single reason is certain enough. Rather, I have pursued only the first and principal ones, and in such a way that I would now venture to put them forward as most certain and most evident demonstrations. I will add, too, that they are such that I do not think any path lies open to human ingenuity by which better ones could ever be found. For the urgency of the cause, and the glory of God, to which this whole work is directed, compel me here to speak somewhat more freely of my own work than is my custom.

Yet however certain and evident I think them, I am not therefore persuaded that they are suited to everyone's grasp. In geometry there are many things written by Archimedes, Apollonius, Pappus, and others which everyone regards as evident and certain, because they contain nothing at all that is not very easy to know when considered on its own, and nothing in which what follows does not fit precisely with what precedes. Yet because they are rather long and demand a very attentive reader, they are understood by only a very few. In the same way, although I think that the reasons I use here equal or even surpass geometrical ones in certainty and evidence, I fear that many people will be unable to perceive them adequately: partly because they too are rather long, and each depends on others; but chiefly because they require a mind entirely free of preconceived opinions, one that can easily withdraw itself from the company of the senses.

And certainly there are not more people in the world suited to metaphysical studies than to geometrical ones. Moreover, [5] there is this difference. In geometry, since everyone is persuaded that

3 The Fifth Lateran Council (1512–17), whose eighth session (1513) condemned the view that the human soul is mortal.

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approbent, dum ea videri volunt intelligere, quàm quod vera refutent: contrà verò in Philosophiâ, cùm credatur nihil esse de quo non possit in utramque partem disputari, pauci veritatem investigant, & multo plures, ex eo quod ausint optima quacque impugnare, famam ingenii aucupantur.

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nothing is usually written for which there is not a certain demonstration, the inexperienced more often go wrong by approving what is false, in their wish to seem to understand it, than by rejecting what is true. In philosophy, by contrast, since it is believed that there is nothing that cannot be argued on either side, few investigate the truth, and far more seek a reputation for ingenuity by daring to attack whatever is best.

AT 5

Atque ideo, qualescunque meae rationes esse possint, quia tamen ad Philosophiam spectant, non spero me illarum ope magnum operae pretium esse facturum, nisi me patrocinio vestro adjuvetis. Sed cùm tanta inhaereat omnium mentibus de vestrâ Facultate opinio, tantaeque sit authoritatis SORBONAE nomen, ut non modo in rebus fidei nulli unquam Societati post sacra Concilia tantum creditum sit quàm vestrae, sed etiam in humanâ Philosophiâ nullibi major perspicacia & soliditas, nec ad ferenda judicia major integritas & sapientia esse existimetur; non dubito quin, si tantam hujus scripti curam suscipere dignemini, primo quidem, ut a vobis corrigatur:

And so, whatever my reasons may be worth, since they belong to philosophy, I do not expect to accomplish much of value with their help unless you assist me with your patronage. But the opinion of your Faculty is so deeply fixed in everyone's mind, and the name of the Sorbonne carries such authority, that not only in matters of faith has no body, after the sacred councils, ever been trusted as much as yours, but also in human philosophy nowhere is there thought to be greater insight and soundness, or greater integrity and wisdom in delivering judgments. I therefore have no doubt that if you would deign to take such care of this work—first, by correcting it

memor enim, non modo humanitatis, sed maxime etiam inscitiae meae, non affirmo nullos in eo esse errores; deinde, ut quae vel desunt, vel non satis absoluta sunt, vel majorem explicationem desiderant, addantur, perficiantur, illustrentur, aut a vobis ipsis, aut saltem a me, postquam a vobis ero admonitus; ac denique, ut postquam rationes in eo contentae, quibus Deum esse, mentemque a corpore aliam esse probatur, ad eam perspicuitatem erunt perductae, ad quam ipsas perduci posse confido, ita [6] nempe ut pro accuratissimis demonstrationibus habendae sint, hoc ipsum declarare & publice testari velitis: non dubito, inquam, quin, si hoc fiat, omnes errores, qui de his quaestionibus unquam fuerunt, brevi ex hominum mentibus deleantur.

(for, mindful not only of my human condition but above all of my ignorance, I do not claim that there are no errors in it); next, by seeing that whatever is missing, or not sufficiently finished, or in need of fuller explanation is added, completed, or clarified, either by you yourselves or at least by me once you have advised me; and finally, once the reasons it contains, by which it is proved that God exists and that the mind is distinct from the body, have been brought to the clarity to which I am confident they can be brought, so [6] that they must be regarded as the most exact demonstrations, by being willing to declare this and to testify to it publicly—if this is done, I say, I have no doubt that all the errors there have ever been on these questions will soon be erased from people's minds.

AT 6

Veritas enim ipsa facile efficiet ut reliqui ingeniosi & docti vestro judicio subscribant; & authoritas, ut Athei, qui scioli magis quàm ingeniosi aut docti esse solent, contradicendi animum deponant, atque etiam ut forte rationes, quas ab omnibus ingenio praeditis pro demonstrationibus haberi scient, ipsi propugnent, ne non intelligere videantur. Ac denique caeteri omnes tot testimoniis facile credent, nemoque amplius erit in mundo, qui vel Dei existentiam, vel realem humanae

For the truth itself will easily lead other people of talent and learning to subscribe to your judgment; and your authority will lead the atheists, who are usually smatterers rather than people of talent or learning, to lay aside their urge to contradict, and perhaps even to defend the reasons which they know are regarded as demonstrations by all people of talent, so as not to seem not to under-

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animae a corpore distinctionem ausit in dubium revocare. Cujus rei quanta esset utilitas, vos ipsi, pro vestrâ singulari sapientiâ, omnium optime aestimare potestis; nec deceret me vobis, qui maximum Ecclesiae Catholicae columen semper fuistis, Dei & Religionis causam pluribus hîc commendare.	stand them. And finally, everyone else will readily believe so many testimonies, and there will no longer be anyone in the world who dares to call into doubt either the existence of God or the real distinction of the human soul from the body. How great the benefit of this would be, you yourselves, in your singular wisdom, can judge better than anyone; nor would it befit me to commend the cause of God and religion at greater length here to you, who have always been the greatest pillar of the Catholic Church.

Preface to the Reader

Descartes answers early objections and asks readers to read the objections and replies before judging.

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AT 7	Quaestiones de Deo & mente humanâ jam ante paucis attigi in Dissertatione de Methodo recte regendae rationis & veritatis in scientiis investigandae, gallice editâ anno 1637, non quidem ut ipsas ibi accurate tractarem, sed tantùm ut delibarem, & ex lectorum judiciis addiscerem quâ ratione postea essent tractandae. Tanti enim momenti mihi visae sunt, ut plus unâ vice de ipsis agendum esse judicarem; viamque sequor ad eas explicandas tam parum tritam, atque ab usu communi tam remotam, ut non utile putarim ipsam in gallico & passim ab omnibus legendo scripto fusiùs docere, ne debiliora etiam ingenia credere possent eam sibi esse ingrediendam.	I touched briefly on the questions of God and the human mind some time ago, in the Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting Reason and Seeking Truth in the Sciences, published in French in 1637. My aim there was not to treat them thoroughly, but only to give a taste of them, and to learn from readers' judgments how they should be treated afterward. For they seemed to me of such importance that I judged they ought to be dealt with more than once. And the path I follow in explaining them is so little trodden, and so far from common use, that I did not think it useful to teach it at greater length in a work written in French and to be read by everyone indiscriminately, lest those of weaker talent too might believe that they ought to set out on it.[1]
	Cùm autem ibi rogassem omnes quibus aliquid in meis scriptis reprehensione dignum occurreret, ut ejus me monere dignarentur, nulla in ea quae de his quaestionibus attigeram notatu digna objecta sunt, praeter duo, ad quae hîc paucis, priusquam earumdem accuratiorem explicationem aggrediar, respondebo.	But when I had asked there that anyone who found something in my writings worthy of criticism should kindly let me know, no objections worth noting were raised against what I had touched on concerning these questions, except two. I will reply to these briefly here, before undertaking a more exact explanation of the questions themselves.
	Primum est, ex eo quod mens humana in se con [8] versa non percipiat aliud se esse quàm rem cogitantem, non sequi ejus naturam sive essentiam in eo tantùm consistere, quod sit res cogitans, ita ut vox tantùm caetera omnia excludat quae forte etiam dici possent ad animae naturam pertinere. Cui objectioni respondeo me etiam ibi noluisse illa excludere in ordine ad ipsam rei veritatem (de quâ scilicet tunc non agebam), sed dumtaxat in ordine ad meam perceptionem, adeo ut sensus esset me nihil plane cognoscere quod ad essentiam meam scirem pertinere, praeterquam quod essem res cogitans, sive res habens in se facultatem cogitandi.	The first is this: from the fact that the human mind, when turned [8] in on itself, does not perceive itself to be anything other than a thinking thing, it does not follow that its nature or essence consists only in its being a thinking thing, in such a way that the word "only" excludes everything else that might perhaps also be said to belong to the nature of the soul. To this objection I reply that there too I did not mean to exclude those things in the order of the truth of the matter itself (which I was not then dealing with), but only in the order of my perception. The meaning was that I knew nothing at all that I knew to belong to my essence except

1 Descartes' Discourse on Method (1637), whose Part Four briefly sketches the arguments developed here.

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	that I was a thinking thing, or a thing having in itself the faculty of thinking.
AT 8 In sequentibus autem ostendam quo pacto, ex eo quod nihil aliud ad essentiam meam pertinere cognoscam, sequatur nihil etiam aliud revera ad illam pertinere.	In what follows, however, I will show how, from the fact that I know nothing else to belong to my essence, it follows that nothing else in fact belongs to it.
Alterum est, ex eo quod ideam rei me perfectioris in me habeam, non sequi ipsam ideam esse me perfectiorem, & multo minùs illud quod per istam ideam repraesentatur existere. Sed respondeo hîc subesse aequivocationem in voce ideae: sumi enim potest vel materialiter, pro operatione intellectûs, quo sensu me perfectior dici nequit, vel objective, pro re per istam operationem repraesentatâ, quae res, etsi non supponatur extra intellectum existere, potest tamen me esse perfectior ratione suae essentiae. Quomodo verò, ex hoc solo quod rei me perfectioris idea in me sit, sequatur illam rem revera existere, fuse in sequentibus exponetur.	The second is that from the fact that I have within me the idea of a thing more perfect than I am, it does not follow that the idea itself is more perfect than I am, and much less that what is represented by that idea exists. But I reply that there is an ambiguity here in the word "idea." It can be taken either materially, for an operation of the intellect, in which sense it cannot be said to be more perfect than I am; or objectively, for the thing represented by that operation, and this thing, even if it is not supposed to exist outside the intellect, can nevertheless be more perfect than I am by reason of its essence. But how, from the mere fact that there is in me the idea of a thing more perfect than I am, it follows that this thing really exists will be explained at length in what follows.
Vidi quidem praeterea duo quaedam scripta satis longa, sed quibus non tam meae his de rebus rationes quàm conclusiones argumentis ex Atheorum locis [9] communibus mutuatis impugnabantur. Et quoniam istiusmodi argumenta nullam vim habere possunt apud eos, qui rationes meas intelligent, adeoque praepostera & imbecillia sunt multorum judicia, ut magis a primum acceptis opinionibus, quantumvis falsis & a ratione alienis, persuadeantur, quàm a verâ & firmâ, sed posterius auditâ, ipsarum refutatione, nolo hîc ad illa respondere, ne mihi sint prius referenda.	I have also seen two fairly long writings, but in them it was not so much my reasons on these matters as my conclusions that were attacked, with arguments borrowed from atheist [9] commonplaces. Arguments of that kind can have no force with those who understand my reasons; and the judgments of many people are so perverse and weak that they are more persuaded by opinions accepted first, however false and contrary to reason, than by a true and solid refutation of them heard later. So I do not wish to reply to them here, lest I should first have to report them.
AT 9 Tantùmque generaliter dicam ea omnia, quae vulgo jactantur ab Atheis ad existentiam Dei impugnandam, semper ex eo pendere, quod vel humani affectus Deo affingantur, vel mentibus nostris tanta vis & sapientia arrogetur, ut quidnam Deus facere possit ac debeat, determinare & comprehendere conemur; adeo ut, modò tantùm memores simus mentes nostras considerandas esse ut finitas, Deum autem ut incomprehensibilem & infinitum, nullam ista difficultatem sint nobis paritura.	I will say only, in general, that everything the atheists commonly throw out to attack the existence of God always depends either on attributing human emotions to God, or on claiming for our minds so much power and wisdom that we try to determine and comprehend what God can and ought to do. So as long as we simply remember that our minds are to be regarded as finite, and God as incomprehensible and infinite, these arguments will cause us no difficulty.
Jam verò, postquam hominum judicia semel utcunque sum expertus, iterum hîc aggredior easdem de Deo & mente humanâ quaestiones, simulque totius primae	Now, having once made some trial of people's judgments, I here take up again the same questions about God and the human mind, and at the

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	Philosophiae initia tractare; sed ita ut nullum vulgi plausum, nullamque Lectorum frequentiam expectem: quin etiam nullis author sum ut haec legant, nisi tantùm iis qui seriò mecum meditari, mentemque a sensibus, simulque ab omnibus praejudiciis, abducere poterunt ac volent, quales non nisi admodum paucos reperiri satis scio. Quantum autem ad illos, qui, rationum mearum seriem & nexum comprehendere non curantes, in singulas tantùm clausulas, ut [10] multis in more est, argutari studebunt, non magnum ex hujus scripti lectione fructum sunt percepturi; & quamvis forte in multis cavillandi occasionem inveniant, non facile tamen aliquid quod urgeat aut responsione dignum sit objicient.	same time undertake to treat the beginnings of the whole of first philosophy—but in such a way that I expect no applause from the crowd and no great number of readers. Indeed, I advise no one to read these things except those who are able and willing to meditate seriously with me and to withdraw their minds from the senses, and at the same time from all preconceived opinions; and I know well enough that very few such people are to be found. As for those who, not caring to grasp the order and connection of my reasons, busy themselves with quibbling over individual clauses, as [10] many are in the habit of doing, they will get little profit from reading this work. Although they may perhaps find occasion for cavilling in many places, they will not easily raise any objection that is pressing or deserves a reply.
AT 10	Quia verò nequidem etiam aliis spondeo me in omnibus primâ fronte satisfacturum, nec tantum mihi arrogo ut confidam me omnia posse praevidere quae alicui difficilia videbuntur, primo quidem in Meditationibus illas ipsas cogitationes exponam, quarum ope ad certam & evidentem cognitionem veritatis mihi videor pervenisse, ut experiar an fortè iisdem rationibus, quibus ego persuasus sum, alios etiam possim persuadere. Postea vero respondebo ad objectiones virorum aliquot ingenio & doctrinâ excellentium, ad quos hae Meditationes, antequam typis mandarentur, examinandae missae sunt. Satis enim multa & varia ab illis fuerunt objecta, ut ausim sperare non facile quicquam aliis, saltem alicujus momenti, venturum in mentem, quod ii nondum attigerint.	But since I do not promise even the others that I will satisfy them on every point at first sight, and I do not presume so far as to trust that I can foresee everything that will seem difficult to anyone, I will first set out in the Meditations the very thoughts by whose help I seem to myself to have reached a certain and evident knowledge of the truth, so as to find out whether I can perhaps persuade others by the same reasons that persuaded me. After that I will reply to the objections of several men outstanding in talent and learning, to whom these Meditations were sent for examination before they went to press. For they raised objections numerous and varied enough that I venture to hope that nothing, at least of any importance, will easily occur to others that they have not already touched on.
	Ideoque rogo etiam atque etiam Lectores, ut non prius de Meditationibus judicium ferant, quàm objectiones istas earumque solutiones omnes perlegere dignati sint.	And so I ask readers again and again not to pass judgment on the Meditations until they have been good enough to read through all these objections and the replies to them.

Synopsis of the Six Meditations

Descartes summarizes the aim and argument of each of the six meditations.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
AT 12	In primâ, causae exponuntur propter quas de rebus omnibus, praesertim materialibus, possumus dubitare; quandiu scilicet non habemus alia scientiarum fundamenta, quàm ea quae antehac habuimus. Etsi autem istius tantae dubitationis utilitas primâ fronte non appareat, est tamen in eo maxima quòd ab omnibus praejudiciis nos liberet, viamque facillimam sternat ad mentem a sensibus abducendam; ac denique efficiat, ut de iis, quae posteà vera esse comperiemus, non amplius dubitare possimus.	In the First Meditation, the reasons are set out for which we can doubt all things, especially material things—so long, that is, as we have no other foundations for the sciences than those we have had until now. Although the usefulness of so extensive a doubt is not apparent at first sight, it is in fact very great: it frees us from all preconceived opinions and lays down the easiest path for withdrawing the mind from the senses; and finally, it makes it impossible for us to doubt any further the things we later discover to be true.
	In secundâ, mens quae, propriâ libertate utens, supponit ea omnia non existere de quorum existentiâ vel minimum potest dubitare, animadvertit fieri non posse quin ipsa interim existat. Quod etiam summae est utilitatis, quoniam hoc pacto facile distinguit quaenam ad se, hoc est, ad naturam intellectualem, & quaenam ad corpus pertineant. Sed quia forte nonnulli rationes de animae immortalitate illo in loco expectabunt, eos hîc monendos [13] puto me conatum esse nihil scribere quod non accurate demonstrarem; ideoque non alium ordinem sequi potuisse, quàm illum qui est apud Geometras usitatus, ut nempe omnia praemitterem ex quibus quaesita propositio dependet, antequam de ipsâ quidquam concluderem.	In the Second, the mind, using its own freedom, supposes that none of the things exist about whose existence it can have even the slightest doubt, and notices that it cannot be that it does not itself exist meanwhile. This too is of the greatest usefulness, since in this way the mind easily distinguishes what belongs to itself, that is, to an intellectual nature, and what belongs to the body. But since some people will perhaps expect arguments for the immortality of the soul in that place, I think I should warn them here [13] that I have tried to write nothing that I could not demonstrate precisely. So I could follow no order other than the one customary among geometers: namely, to set out first everything on which the proposition in question depends, before concluding anything about it.
AT 13	Primum autem & praecipuum quod praerequiritur ad cognoscendam animae immortalitatem, esse ut quàm maxime perspicuum de eâ conceptum, & ab omni conceptu corporis plane distinctum, formemus; quod ibi factum est. Praeterea verò requiri etiam ut sciamus ea omnia quae clare & distincte intelligimus, eo ipso modo quo illa intelligimus, esse vera: quod ante quartam Meditationem probari non potuit; & habendum esse distinctum naturae corporeae conceptum, qui partim in ipsâ secunda, partim etiam in quintâ & sextâ formatur; atque ex his debere concludi ea omnia quae clare & distincte concipiuntur ut substantiae diversae, sicuti	The first and chief prerequisite for knowing the immortality of the soul is that we form a conception of it that is as clear as possible and entirely distinct from every conception of body; and this has been done there. It is further required that we know that everything we understand clearly and distinctly is true in the very way in which we understand it, which could not be proved before the Fourth Meditation; that we have a distinct conception of corporeal nature, which is formed partly in the Second itself and partly in the Fifth and Sixth; and that from these it be concluded that all things that are clearly and distinctly conceived as differ-

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concipiuntur mens & corpus, esse revera substantias realiter a se mutuò distinctas; hocque in sextâ concludi.

Idemque etiam in ipsâ confirmari ex eo quòd nullum corpus nisi divisibile intelligamus, contrà autem nullam mentem nisi indivisibilem: neque enim possumus ullius mentis mediam partem concipere, ut possumus cujuslibet quantamvis exigui corporis; adeo ut eorum naturae non modo diversae, sed etiam quodammodo contrariae agnoscantur.

Non autem ulteriùs eâ de re in hoc scripto me egisse; tum quia haec sufficiunt ad ostendendum ex corporis corruptione mentis interitum non sequi, atque sic ad alterius vitae spem mortalibus faciendam; tum etiam quia praemissae, ex quibus ipsa mentis immortalitas concludi potest, ex totius Physicae explicatione dependent: primo [14] ut sciatur omnes omnino substantias, sive res quae a Deo creari debent ut existant, ex naturâ suâ esse incorruptibiles, nec posse unquam desinere esse, nisi ab eodem Deo concursum suum iis denegante ad nihilum reducantur; ac deinde ut advertatur corpus quidem in genere sumptum esse substantiam, ideoque nunquam etiam perire.

AT 14 Sed corpus humanum, quatenus a reliquis differt corporibus, non nisi ex certâ membrorum configuratione aliisque ejusmodi accidentibus esse conflatum; mentem verò humanam non ita ex ullis accidentibus constare, sed puram esse substantiam: etsi enim omnia ejus accidentia mutentur, ut quòd alias res intelligat, alias velit, alias sentiat, &c, non idcirco ipsa mens alia evadit; humanum autem corpus aliud fit ex hoc solo quòd figura quarumdam ejus partium mutetur: ex quibus sequitur corpus quidem perfacile interire, mentem autem ex naturâ suâ esse immortalem.

In tertiâ Meditatione, meum praecipuum argumentum ad probandum Dei existentiam satis fusè, ut mihi videtur, explicui. Verumtamen, quia, ut Lectorum animos quàm maxime a sensibus abducerem, nullis ibi comparationibus a rebus corporeis petitis volui uti, multae fortasse obscuritates remanserunt, sed quae, ut

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ent substances, as mind and body are conceived, are in fact substances really distinct from one another. This is concluded in the Sixth.

This is also confirmed in the same Meditation from the fact that we cannot understand any body except as divisible, and, on the other hand, any mind except as indivisible. For we cannot conceive half of any mind, as we can of any body, however small; so that their natures are recognized to be not only different but in a certain way opposed.

I have not, however, dealt with this matter any further in this work. First, these points are enough to show that the destruction of the mind does not follow from the corruption of the body, and so to give mortals hope of another life. Second, the premises from which the immortality of the mind can be concluded depend on an account of the whole of physics. First, [14] it must be known that absolutely all substances—that is, things that must be created by God in order to exist—are by their nature incorruptible, and can never cease to be unless they are reduced to nothing by that same God withdrawing his concurrence from them. And then it must be noticed that body, taken in general, is a substance, and so it too never perishes.[1]

But the human body, insofar as it differs from other bodies, is made up only of a certain configuration of limbs and other accidents of this kind, whereas the human mind is not made up of any accidents in this way, but is a pure substance. For even if all its accidents change—so that it understands different things, wills different things, senses different things, and so on—the mind itself does not on that account become a different mind; whereas the human body becomes a different body merely from a change in the shape of some of its parts. From this it follows that the body can very easily perish, while the mind is by its nature immortal.

In the Third Meditation I have explained my principal argument for proving the existence of God at sufficient length, as it seems to me. However, since I wished to lead my readers' minds as far as possible away from the senses, I chose not to use any comparisons drawn from corporeal things

1 "Concurrence" (concursus): God's continuing causal support, without which no created thing could go on existing.

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	spero, postea in responsionibus ad objectiones plane tollentur; ut, inter caeteras, quomodo idea entis summe perfecti, quae in nobis est	there, and so many obscurities may perhaps remain. These, I hope, will be entirely removed later in the replies to the objections—among others, the question of how the idea of a supremely perfect being, which is in us,
	tantum habeat realitatis objectivae, ut non possit non esse a causâ summe perfectâ, quod ibi illustratur comparatione machinae valde perfectae, cujus idea est in mente alicujus artificis; ut enim artificium objectivum hujus ideae debet habere aliquam causam, nempe scientiam hujus artificis, vel alicujus alterius a quo illam accepit, ita [15] idea Dei, quae in nobis est, non potest non habere Deum ipsum pro causâ.	has so much objective reality that it cannot fail to come from a supremely perfect cause. This is illustrated there by comparison with a machine of great perfection, the idea of which is in the mind of some craftsman. For just as the objective artistry of this idea must have some cause—namely the knowledge of this craftsman, or of someone else from whom he received it—so [15] the idea of God that is in us cannot fail to have God himself as its cause.[2]
AT 15	In quartâ, probatur ea omnia quae clare et distincte percipimus, esse vera, simulque in quo ratio falsitatis consistat explicatur: quae necessariò sciri debent tam ad praecedentia firmanda, quàm ad reliqua intelligenda. (Sed ibi interim est advertendum nullo modo agi de peccato, vel errore qui committitur in persecutione boni & mali, sed de eo tantùm qui contingit in dijudicatione veri & falsi. Nec ea spectari quae ad fidem pertinent, vel ad vitam agendam, sed tantùm speculativas & solius luminis naturalis ope cognitas veritates.)	In the Fourth, it is proved that everything we perceive clearly and distinctly is true, and at the same time it is explained what the nature of falsity consists in. These things must necessarily be known, both to confirm what precedes and to understand what remains. (But it should be noted meanwhile that the discussion there is in no way about sin, or the error committed in pursuing good and evil, but only about the error that occurs in distinguishing true from false. Nor are matters considered that pertain to faith or to the conduct of life, but only speculative truths, known solely by the help of the natural light.)
	In quintâ, praeterquam quòd natura corporea in genere sumpta explicatur, novâ etiam ratione Dei existentia demonstratur: sed in quâ rursus nonnullae fortè occurrent difficultates, quae postea in responsione ad objectiones resolventur: ac denique ostenditur quo pacto verum sit, ipsarum Geometricarum demonstrationum certitudinem a cognitione Dei pendere.	In the Fifth, besides an explanation of corporeal nature taken in general, the existence of God is also demonstrated by a new argument—though here again some difficulties may perhaps arise, which will be resolved later in the reply to the objections. And finally it is shown in what sense it is true that the certainty even of geometrical demonstrations depends on the knowledge of God.
	In sextâ denique, intellectio ab imaginatione secernitur; distinctionum signa describuntur; mentem realiter a corpore distingui probatur; eandem nihilominus tam arctè illi esse conjunctam, ut unum quid cum ipsâ componat, ostenditur; omnes errores qui a sensibus oriri solent recensentur; modi quibus vitari possint exponuntur; & denique rationes omnes ex quibus rerum materialium existentia possit concludi, afferuntur: non quòd eas valde utiles esse putarim ad probandum id ipsum quod [16] probant, nempe revera esse aliquem	In the Sixth, finally, understanding is separated from imagination; the marks of the distinctions are described; it is proved that the mind is really distinct from the body, and yet shown to be so closely joined to it that it forms a single thing with it; all the errors that commonly arise from the senses are surveyed; the ways in which they can be avoided are set out; and finally all the reasons from which the existence of material things can

2 "Objective reality" is the reality a thing has as represented in an idea; "formal reality" is the reality a thing has in itself.

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	mundum, & homines habere corpora, & similia, de quibus nemo unquam sanae mentis seriò dubitavit; sed quia, illas considerando, agnoscitur non esse tam firmas nec tam perspicuas quàm sunt eae, per quas in mentis nostrae & Dei cognitionem devenimus; adeo ut hae sint omnium certissimae & evidentissimae quae ab humano ingenio sciri possint.	be concluded are presented. This is not because I thought them very useful for proving what they [16] prove—namely, that there really is a world, that human beings have bodies, and the like, which no one of sound mind has ever seriously doubted—but because, in considering them, one recognizes that they are neither as firm nor as clear as those by which we arrive at knowledge of our own mind and of God; so that these latter are the most certain and most evident of all that can be known by human ingenuity.
AT 16	Cujus unius rei probationem in his Meditationibus mihi pro scopo proposui. Nec idcirco hîc recenseo varias illas quaestiones de quibus etiam in ipsis ex occasione tractatur.	The proof of this one thing is what I have set before myself as my aim in these Meditations. And so I do not list here the various other questions that are also dealt with in them as occasion arises.

First Meditation

What can be called into doubt
Descartes doubts all his former beliefs, using the senses, dreams and a deceiving demon.

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AT 17	Animadverti jam ante aliquot annos quàm multa, ineunte aetate, falsa pro veris admiserim, & quàm dubia sint quaecunque istis postea superextruxi, ac proinde funditus omnia semel in vitâ esse evertenda, atque a primis fundamentis denuo inchoandum, si quid aliquando firmum & mansurum cupiam in scientiis stabilire; sed ingens opus esse videbatur, eamque aetatem expectabam, quae foret tam matura, ut capessendis disciplinis aptior nulla sequeretur. Quare tamdiu cunctatus sum ut deinceps essem in culpâ, si quod temporis superest ad agendum, deliberando consumerem. Opportune igitur hodie mentem curis [18] omnibus exsolvi, securum mihi otium procuravi, solus secedo, seriò tandem & libere generali huic mearum opinionum eversioni vacabo.	Some years ago now I noticed how many false things I had accepted as true in my youth, and how doubtful everything was that I had since built on them; and so I saw that once in my life everything had to be torn down completely and begun anew from the first foundations, if I ever wanted to establish anything firm and lasting in the sciences. But the task seemed enormous, and I kept waiting for an age so mature that no later one would be better suited to taking up learning. For that reason I delayed so long that from now on I would be at fault if I used up in deliberating the time that remains for acting. So today, at the right moment, I have freed my mind from all [18] cares, I have secured for myself untroubled leisure, I withdraw alone, and at last I will devote myself seriously and freely to this general overthrow of my opinions.
AT 18	Ad hoc autem non erit necesse, ut omnes esse falsas ostendam, quod nunquam fortassis assequi possem; sed quia jam ratio persuadet, non minus accurate ab iis quae non plane certa sunt atque indubitata, quàm ab aperte falsis assensionem esse cohibendam, satis erit ad omnes rejiciendas, si aliquam rationem dubitandi in unâquâque reperero. Nec ideo etiam singulae erunt percurrendae, quod operis esset infiniti; sed quia, suffossis fundamentis, quidquid iis superaedificatum est sponte collabitur, aggrediar statim ipsa principia, quibus illud omne quod olim credidi nitebatur.	For this, however, it will not be necessary to show that they are all false, which I might perhaps never manage. Since reason already persuades me that I should withhold assent no less carefully from things that are not entirely certain and indubitable than from those that are obviously false, it will be enough, for rejecting all of them, if I find some reason for doubt in each. Nor, for that reason, will I need to go through them one by one, which would be an endless task. Since anything built on foundations collapses of its own accord once they are undermined, I will go straight for the principles on which everything I once believed rested.

DOUBTING THE SENSES

Descartes notes that the senses sometimes deceive but asks whether that makes everything they report doubtful.

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	Nempe quidquid hactenus ut maxime verum admisi, vel a sensibus, vel per sensus accepi; hos autem interdum	Whatever I have accepted up to now as most true, I have received either from the senses or through

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fallere deprehendi, ac prudentiae est nunquam illis plane confidere qui nos vel semel deceperunt.	the senses. But I have found that these sometimes deceive, and it is prudent never to trust completely those who have deceived us even once.
Sed forte, quamvis interdum sensus circa minuta quaedam & remotiora nos fallant, pleraque tamen alia sunt de quibus dubitari plane non potest, quamvis ab iisdem hauriantur: ut jam me hîc esse, foco assidere, hyemali togâ esse indutum, chartam istam manibus contrectare, & similia. Manus verò has ipsas, totumque hoc corpus meum esse, quâ ratione posset negari? nisi me forte comparem nescio quibus insanis, [19] quorum cerebella tam contumax vapor ex atrâ bile labefactat, ut constanter asseverent vel se esse reges, cùm sunt pauperrimi, vel purpurâ indutos, cùm sunt nudi, vel caput habere fictile, vel se totos esse cucurbitas, vel ex vitro conflatos; sed amentes sunt isti, nec minùs ipse demens viderer, si quod ab iis exemplum ad me transferrem.	But perhaps, although the senses sometimes deceive us about things that are very small or far away, there are many other things about which there can be no doubt at all, even though they are drawn from the same source: for example, that I am here, sitting by the fire, wearing a winter gown, handling this paper, and the like. And how could it be denied that these very hands and this whole body are mine? Unless perhaps I were to compare myself with some madmen or other, [19] whose brains are so disordered by a stubborn vapor from black bile that they constantly insist that they are kings when they are paupers, or that they are dressed in purple when they are naked, or that they have heads made of clay, or that they are entirely gourds, or made of glass. But such people are insane, and I would seem no less mad myself if I took them as a model for myself.

THE DREAM ARGUMENT

Descartes observes that dreams can mimic waking life, though simple truths of arithmetic seem to survive.

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AT 19 Praeclare sane, tanquam non sim homo qui soleam noctu dormire, & eadem omnia in somnis pati, vel etiam interdum minùs verisimilia, quàm quae isti vigilantes. Quàm frequenter verò usitata ista, me hîc esse, togâ vestiri, foco assidere, quies nocturna persuadet, cùm tamen positis vestibus jaceo inter strata! Atqui nunc certe vigilantibus oculis intueor hanc chartam, non sopitum est hoc caput quod commoveo, manum istam prudens & sciens extendo & sentio; non tam distincta contingerent dormienti. Quasi scilicet non recorder a similibus etiam cogitationibus me aliàs in somnis fuisse delusum; quae dum cogito attentius, tam plane video nunquam certis indiciis vigiliam a somno posse distingui, ut obstupescam, & fere hic ipse stupor mihi opinionem somni confirmet.	A fine argument, to be sure—as if I were not a man who is accustomed to sleep at night and to experience in dreams all the same things as these people do when awake, or sometimes even less plausible ones! How often the quiet of the night persuades me of these ordinary things—that I am here, wearing my gown, sitting by the fire—when in fact I am lying undressed between the sheets! But now, surely, I am looking at this paper with waking eyes; this head that I move is not asleep; I stretch out this hand deliberately and knowingly, and I feel it. Things so distinct would not happen to someone asleep. As if, of course, I did not remember having been deceived by similar thoughts in dreams at other times! When I think about this more attentively, I see so plainly that waking can never be distinguished from sleep by sure signs that I am astonished, and this very astonishment almost confirms me in the opinion that I am asleep.
Age ergo somniemus, nec particularia ista vera sint, nos oculos aperire, caput movere, manus extendere, nec forte	Well then, suppose we are dreaming, and these particulars are not true—that we open our eyes,

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etiam nos habere tales manus, nec tale totum corpus; tamen profecto fatendum est visa per quietem esse veluti quasdam pictas imagines, quae non nisi ad similitudinem rerum verarum fingi potuerunt; ideoque saltem generalia haec, oculos, caput, manus, totumque corpus, res quasdam non imaginarias, sed veras existere.

Nam sane pictores ipsi, ne tum qui [20] dem, cùm Sirenas & Satyriscos maxime inusitatis formis fingere student, naturas omni ex parte novas iis possunt assignare, sed tantummodo diversorum animalium membra permiscent; vel si forte aliquid excogitent adeo novum, ut nihil omnino ei simile fuerit visum, atque ita plane fictitium sit & falsum, certe tamen ad minimum veri colores esse debent, ex quibus illud componant. Nec dispari ratione, quamvis etiam generalia haec, oculi, caput, manus, & similia, imaginaria esse possent, necessario tamen saltem alia quaedam adhuc magis simplicia & universalia vera esse fatendum est, ex quibus tanquam coloribus veris omnes istae, seu verae, seu falsae, quae in cogitatione nostrâ sunt, rerum imagines effinguntur.

AT 20 Cujus generis esse videntur natura corporea in communi, ejusque extensio; item figura rerum extensarum; item quantitas, sive earumdem magnitudo & numerus; item locus in quo existant, tempusque per quod durent, & similia.

Quapropter ex his forsan non male concludemus Physicam, Astronomiam, Medicinam, disciplinasque alias omnes, quae a rerum compositarum consideratione dependent, dubias quidem esse; atqui Arithmeticam, Geometriam, aliasque ejusmodi, quae nonnisi de simplicissimis & maxime generalibus rebus tractant, atque utrum eae sint in rerum naturâ necne, parum curant, aliquid certi atque indubitati continere. Nam sive vigilem, sive dormiam, duo & tria simul juncta sunt quinque, quadratumque non plura habet latera quàm quatuor; nec fieri posse videtur ut tam perspicuae veritates in suspicionem falsitatis incurrant.

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move our heads, stretch out our hands—and suppose that perhaps we do not even have such hands, or such a body at all. Still, it must surely be admitted that the things seen in sleep are like painted images, which could only have been fashioned in the likeness of true things; and so at least these general things—eyes, head, hands, and the whole body—exist as things that are not imaginary but true.

For even when painters themselves [20] try to depict sirens and little satyrs in the most unusual forms, they cannot give them natures that are new in every respect; they merely mix together the limbs of different animals. Or if perhaps they devise something so new that nothing at all like it has ever been seen, so that it is entirely fictitious and false, still at least the colors from which they compose it must certainly be true. By similar reasoning, even if these general things—eyes, head, hands, and the like—could be imaginary, it must still necessarily be admitted that at least certain other things, simpler and more universal still, are true, from which, as from true colors, all those images of things that are in our thought, whether true or false, are formed.

Of this kind seem to be corporeal nature in general and its extension; the shape of extended things; their quantity, that is, their size and number; the place in which they exist, the time through which they endure, and the like.

So perhaps we will not be wrong to conclude from this that physics, astronomy, medicine, and all the other disciplines that depend on the consideration of composite things are indeed doubtful, but that arithmetic, geometry, and others of that kind, which deal only with the simplest and most general things and care little whether these exist in nature or not, contain something certain and indubitable. For whether I am awake or asleep, two and three added together make five, and a square has no more than four sides; and it does not seem possible that such transparent truths should fall under suspicion of falsity.

A DECEIVING GOD

Descartes asks whether an all-powerful God might deceive him even about arithmetic and geometry.

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Verumtamen infixa quaedam est meae menti vetus opinio, Deum esse qui potest omnia, & a quo talis, qualis existo, sum creatus. Unde autem scio illum non fecisse ut nulla plane sit terra, nullum coelum, nulla res extensa, nulla figura, nulla magnitudo, nullus locus, & tamen haec omnia non aliter quàm nunc mihi videantur existere? Imò etiam, quemadmodum judico interdum alios errare circa ea quae se perfectissime scire arbitrantur, ita ego ut fallar quoties duo & tria simul addo, vel numero quadrati latera, vel si quid aliud facilius fingi potest?	Yet there is fixed in my mind a certain long-standing opinion that there is a God who can do everything, and by whom I was created such as I am. How do I know that he has not brought it about that there is no earth at all, no sky, no extended thing, no shape, no size, no place, and yet that all these things seem to me to exist just as they do now? Indeed, just as I sometimes judge that others err about things they think they know most perfectly, how do I know that he has not brought it about that I am deceived every time I add two and three, or count the sides of a square, or do something even easier, if anything easier can be imagined?
At forte noluit Deus ita me decipi, dicitur enim summe bonus; sed si hoc ejus bonitati repugnaret, talem me creasse ut semper fallar, ab eâdem etiam videretur esse alienum permittere ut interdum fallar; quod ultimum tamen non potest dici.	But perhaps God did not want me to be deceived in this way, for he is said to be supremely good. Yet if it were contrary to his goodness to have created me such that I am always deceived, it would seem equally foreign to that goodness to allow me to be deceived sometimes; and yet this last cannot be said.
Essent verò fortasse nonnulli qui tam potentem aliquem Deum mallent negare, quàm res alias omnes credere esse incertas. Sed iis non repugnemus, totumque hoc de Deo demus esse fictitium; at seu fato, seu casu, seu continuatâ rerum serie, seu quovis alio modo me ad id quod sum pervenisse supponant; quoniam falli & errare imperfectio quaedam esse videtur, quo minùs potentem originis meae authorem assignabunt, eo probabilius erit me tam imperfectum esse ut semper fallar.	There may perhaps be some who would rather deny that there is any God so powerful than believe that everything else is uncertain. But let us not argue with them, and let us grant that all this about God is fiction. Whether they suppose that I have come to be what I am by fate, or by chance, or by a continuous series of events, or in any other way, since being deceived and erring seem to be a kind of imperfection, the less powerful they make the author of my origin, the more probable it will be that I am so imperfect as to be always deceived.
Quibus sane argumentis non habeo quod respondeam, sed tandem cogor fateri nihil esse ex iis quae olim vera putabam, de quo non liceat dubitare, idque non per inconsiderantiam vel levitatem, sed propter validas & meditatas rationes; ideoque etiam ab iisdem, non minùs quàm ab aperte falsis, [22] accurate deinceps assensionem esse cohibendam, si quid certi velim invenire.	To these arguments I certainly have no reply. I am finally forced to admit that there is nothing among the things I once thought true about which it is not permissible to doubt—and this not through carelessness or frivolity, but for strong and carefully considered reasons. And so, if I want to find anything certain, I must from now on [22] carefully withhold my assent from these things as well, no less than from what is obviously false.
AT 22 Sed nondum sufficit haec advertisse, curandum est ut recorder; assidue enim recurrunt consuetae opiniones, occupantque credulitatem meam tanquam longo usu &	But it is not enough to have noticed this; I must take care to remember it. For my habitual opin-

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familiaritatis jure sibi devinctam, fere etiam me invito; nec unquam iis assentiri & confidere desuescam, quamdiu tales esse supponam quales sunt revera, nempe aliquo quidem modo dubias, ut jam jam ostensum est, sed nihilominus valde probabiles, & quas multo magis rationi consentaneum sit credere quàm negare. Quapropter, ut opinor, non male agam, si, voluntate plane in contrarium versâ, me ipsum fallam, illasque aliquandiu omnino falsas imaginariasque esse fingam, donec tandem, velut aequatis utrimque praejudiciorum ponderibus, nulla amplius prava consuetudo judicium meum a rectâ rerum perceptione detorqueat.	ions keep coming back, and they take hold of my credulity, which is bound to them, as it were, by long use and the right of familiarity, almost even against my will. Nor will I ever break the habit of assenting to them and trusting them, so long as I suppose them to be what they really are: doubtful in a certain way, as has just been shown, but nonetheless highly probable, and such that it is much more reasonable to believe them than to deny them. For this reason, I think I will not do badly if I turn my will completely in the opposite direction and deceive myself, pretending for a while that they are wholly false and imaginary, until at last, with the weights of preconceived opinion balanced on both sides, as it were, no bad habit any longer twists my judgment away from the correct perception of things.
Etenim scio nihil inde periculi vel erroris interim sequuturum, & me plus aequo diffidentiae indulgere non posse, quandoquidem nunc non rebus agendis, sed cognoscendis tantùm incumbo.	For I know that no danger or error will follow from this in the meantime, and that I cannot indulge my distrust too much, since I am now concerned not with acting but only with knowing.

THE MALICIOUS DEMON

Descartes supposes a malicious demon deceives him about everything and resolves to withhold assent.

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Supponam igitur non optimum Deum, fontem veritatis, sed genium aliquem malignum, eundemque summe potentem & callidum, omnem suam industriam in eo posuisse, ut me falleret: putabo coelum, aërem, terram, colores, figuras, sonos, cunctaque externa nihil aliud esse quàm ludificationes somniorum, quibus insidias credulitati meae tetendit: considerabo [23] meipsum tanquam manus non habentem, non oculos, non carnem, non sanguinem, non aliquem sensum, sed haec omnia me habere falsò opinantem: manebo obstinate in hac meditatione defixus, atque ita, siquidem non in potestate meâ sit aliquid veri cognoscere, at certe hoc quod in me est, ne falsis assentiar, nec mihi quidquam iste deceptor, quantumvis potens, quantumvis callidus, possit imponere, obfirmatâ mente cavebo. Sed laboriosum est hoc institutum, & desidia quaedam ad consuetudinem vitae me reducit.	So I will suppose that not God, who is supremely good and the source of truth, but some malicious demon, supremely powerful and cunning, has devoted all his efforts to deceiving me. I will think that the sky, the air, the earth, colors, shapes, sounds, and all external things are nothing but the illusions of dreams, which he has laid as traps for my credulity. I will consider [23] myself as having no hands, no eyes, no flesh, no blood, no senses at all, but as falsely believing that I have all these things. I will stay stubbornly fixed in this meditation. And so, even if it is not in my power to know anything true, I will at least do what is in my power: with a resolute mind I will guard against assenting to anything false, so that this deceiver, however powerful, however cunning, cannot impose anything on me. But this is an arduous undertaking, and a kind of laziness draws me back to my ordinary way of life.
AT 23 Nec aliter quàm captivus, qui forte imaginariâ libertate fruebatur in somnis, cùm postea suspicari incipit se dormire, timet excitari, blandisque illusionibus lente connivet: sic sponte relabor in veteres opiniones,	I am like a prisoner who happened to be enjoying an imaginary freedom in his sleep: when he later begins to suspect that he is asleep, he fears being woken, and goes slowly along with the pleasant il-

LATIN	ENGLISH
vereorque expergisci, ne placidae quieti laboriosa vigilia succedens, non in aliquâ luce, sed inter inextricabiles jam motarum difficultatum tenebras, in posterum sit degenda.	lusions. In just this way I slide back of my own accord into my old opinions. I dread waking up, for fear that the laborious wakefulness that would follow this peaceful rest would have to be spent from now on not in any light, but amid the inextricable darkness of the difficulties just raised.

Second Meditation

The nature of the human mind, and how it is better known than the body
Descartes finds he cannot doubt his own existence and learns he is a thinking thing.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
AT 24	In tantas dubitationes hesternâ meditatione conjectus sum, ut nequeam ampliùs earum oblivisci, nec videam tamen quâ ratione solvendae sint; sed, tanquam in profundum gurgitem ex improviso delapsus, ita turbatus sum, ut nec possim in imo pedem figere, nec enatare ad summum. Enitar tamen & tentabo rursus eandem viam quam heri fueram ingressus, removendo scilicet illud omne quod vel minimum dubitationis admittit, nihilo secius quàm si omnino falsum esse comperissem; pergamque porro donec aliquid certi, vel, si nihil aliud, saltem hoc ipsum pro certo, nihil esse certi, cognoscam. Nihil nisi punctum petebat Archimedes, quod esset firmum & immobile, ut integram terram loco dimoveret; magna quoque speranda sunt, si vel minimum quid invenero quod certum sit & inconcussum.	Yesterday's meditation has thrown me into such doubts that I can no longer forget them, and yet I do not see how they are to be resolved. It is as if I had suddenly fallen into a deep whirlpool: I am so tossed about that I can neither plant my foot on the bottom nor swim up to the surface. Still, I will make the effort and try once more the same path I set out on yesterday. That is, I will set aside everything that admits even the slightest doubt, just as if I had found it to be wholly false. And I will keep going until I know something certain—or, if nothing else, until I at least know for certain that nothing is certain. Archimedes asked for nothing but one point that was firm and immovable, in order to move the whole earth from its place. So too great things are to be hoped for if I find even the least thing that is certain and unshakable.
	Suppono igitur omnia quae video falsa esse; credo nihil unquam extitisse eorum quae mendax memoria repraesentat; nullos plane habeo sensus; corpus, figura, extensio, motus, locusque sunt chimerae. Quid igitur erit verum? Fortassis hoc unum, nihil esse certi.	I suppose, then, that everything I see is false. I believe that none of the things my lying memory represents to me has ever existed. I have no senses at all. Body, shape, extension, motion, and place are chimeras. What, then, will be true? Perhaps just this one thing: that nothing is certain.
	Sed unde scio nihil esse diversum ab iis omnibus quae jam jam recensui, de quo ne minima quidem occasio sit dubitandi? Nunquid est aliquis Deus, vel quocunque nomine illum vocem, qui mihi has ipsas cogitationes immittit? Quare verò hoc putem, cùm forsan ipsemet illarum author esse possim? Nunquid ergo saltem ego aliquid sum? Sed jam negavi me habere ullos sensus, & ullum corpus. Haereo tamen; nam quid [25] inde? Sumne ita corpori sensibusque alligatus, ut sine illis esse non possim? Sed mihi persuasi nihil plane esse in mundo, nullum coelum, nullam terram, nullas mentes, nulla corpora; nonne igitur etiam me non esse? Imo certe ego eram, si quid mihi persuasi. Sed est deceptor nescio quis, summe potens, summe callidus, qui de industriâ me semper fallit.	But how do I know that there is not something distinct from all the things I have just listed, about which there is not even the slightest occasion for doubt? Is there not some God, or whatever I may call him, who puts these very thoughts into me? But why should I think so, when I myself may perhaps be their author? Am I not, then, at least something? But I have already denied that I have any senses or any body. Still, I hesitate; for what [25] follows from that? Am I so bound to a body and senses that I cannot be without them? But I have persuaded myself that there is nothing at all in the world—no sky, no earth, no minds, no bodies. Did I not, then, also persuade myself that I do not ex-

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		ist? No: surely I existed, if I persuaded myself of something. But there is some deceiver or other, supremely powerful, supremely cunning, who is deliberately deceiving me all the time.

I AM, I EXIST

Descartes concludes that "I am, I exist" is necessarily true whenever he thinks it.

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AT 25	Haud dubie igitur ego etiam sum, si me fallit; & fallat quantum potest, nunquam tamen efficiet, ut nihil sim quamdiu me aliquid esse cogitabo. Adeo ut, omnibus satis superque pensitatis, denique statuendum sit hoc pronuntiatum, Ego sum, ego existo, quoties a me profertur, vel mente concipitur, necessario esse verum.	Then without doubt I too exist, if he is deceiving me. Let him deceive me as much as he can; he will still never bring it about that I am nothing, so long as I think that I am something. So after weighing everything more than enough, I must finally conclude that this statement, "I am, I exist," is necessarily true whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind.
	Nondum verò satis intelligo, quisnam sim ego ille, qui jam necessario sum; deincepsque cavendum est ne forte quid aliud imprudenter assumam in locum meî, sicque aberrem etiam in eâ cognitione, quam omnium certissimam evidentissimamque esse contendo. Quare jam denuo meditabor quidnam me olim esse crediderim, priusquam in has cogitationes incidissem; ex quo deinde subducam quidquid allatis rationibus vel minimum potuit infirmari, ut ita tandem praecise remaneat illud tantùm quod certum est & inconcussum.	But I do not yet understand well enough who this I is that now necessarily exists. So from here on I must take care not to carelessly take something else in place of myself, and so go astray even in the knowledge that I maintain is the most certain and evident of all. I will therefore meditate afresh on what I once believed myself to be, before I fell into these thoughts. From this I will then subtract whatever could be weakened even slightly by the reasons already brought forward, so that in the end precisely what is certain and unshakable, and only that, remains.

WHAT AM I?

Descartes sets aside his old beliefs about himself to find what he can be certain he is.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
	Quidnam igitur antehac me esse putavi? Hominem scilicet. Sed quid est homo? Dicamne animal rationale? Non, quia postea quaerendum foret quidnam animal sit, & quid rationale, atque ita ex unâ quaestione in plures difficilioresque delaberer; nec jam mihi tantum otii est, ut illo velim inter istiusmodi subtilitates abuti. Sed hîc potius attendam, quid sponte [26] & naturâ duce cogitationi meae antehac occurrebat, quoties quid essem considerabam. Nempe occurrebat primo, me habere vultum, manus, brachia, totamque hanc membrorum machinam, qualis etiam in cadavere cernitur, & quam corporis nomine designabam. Occurrebat praeterea me nutriri, incedere, sentire, & cogitare: quas quidem actiones ad animam referebam.	What, then, did I formerly think I was? A man, of course. But what is a man? Shall I say a rational animal? No, because then I would have to ask what an animal is, and what rational is, and so from one question I would slide into several harder ones. Nor do I now have so much spare time that I would want to waste it on subtleties of that kind. Instead I will attend here to what used to occur to my thought spontaneously [26] and with nature as my guide, whenever I considered what I was. First, it occurred to me that I had a face, hands, arms, and this whole machine of limbs, such as can be seen even in a corpse, which I referred to by the name "body." It occurred to me, moreover,

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	that I was nourished, that I walked, sensed, and thought; and these actions I attributed to the soul.
AT 26 Sed quid esset haec anima, vel non advertebam, vel exiguum nescio quid imaginabar, instar venti, vel ignis, vel aetheris, quod crassioribus meî partibus esset infusum. De corpore verò ne dubitabam quidem, sed distincte me nosse arbitrabar ejus naturam, quam si forte, qualem mente concipiebam, describere tentassem, sic explicuissem: per corpus intelligo illud omne quod aptum est figurâ aliquâ terminari, loco circumscribi, spatium sic replere, ut ex eo aliud omne corpus excludat; tactu, visu, auditu, gustu, vel odoratu percipi, necnon moveri pluribus modis, non quidem a seipso, sed ab alio quopiam a quo tangatur: namque habere vim seipsum movendi, item sentiendi, vel cogitandi, nullo pacto ad naturam corporis pertinere judicabam; quinimo mirabar potius tales facultates in quibusdam corporibus reperiri.	But what this soul was, either I did not stop to notice, or else I imagined it as some tenuous something-or-other, like a wind, or fire, or ether, infused into my coarser parts. About body, on the other hand, I had no doubt at all; I thought I knew its nature distinctly. Had I tried to describe it as I conceived it in my mind, I would have explained it like this: by body I understand whatever is apt to be bounded by some shape and enclosed in a place, and to fill a space in such a way as to exclude every other body from it; to be perceived by touch, sight, hearing, taste, or smell; and to be moved in many ways—not by itself, but by something else that touches it. For I judged that the power of moving itself, and likewise of sensing or thinking, in no way belonged to the nature of body. On the contrary, I was rather amazed that such faculties were found in certain bodies.
Quid autem nunc, ubi suppono deceptorem aliquem potentissimum, &, si fas est dicere, malignum, datâ operâ in omnibus, quantum potuit, me delusisse? Possumne affirmare me habere vel minimum quid ex iis omnibus, quae jam dixi ad naturam corporis perti [27] nere? Attendo, cogito, revolvo, nihil occurrit; fatigor eadem frustrà repetere. Quid verò ex iis quae animae tribuebam? Nutriri vel incedere? Quandoquidem jam corpus non habeo, haec quoque nihil sunt nisi figmenta. Sentire? Nempe etiam hoc non fit sine corpore, & permulta sentire visus sum in somnis quae deinde animadverti me non sensisse. Cogitare? Hîc invenio: cogitatio est; haec sola a me divelli nequit. Ego sum, ego existo; certum est. Quandiu autem?	But what now, when I suppose that some deceiver, supremely powerful and, if I may say so, malicious, has deliberately deceived me in everything, as far as he could? Can I affirm that I have even the least of all the things that I have just said belong to the nature [27] of body? I attend, I think, I turn it over; nothing comes to mind. I grow tired of repeating the same things in vain. What about the things I attributed to the soul? Being nourished, or walking? Since I now have no body, these too are nothing but fictions. Sensing? This too surely does not happen without a body; and in dreams I have seemed to sense a great many things that I later realized I had not sensed. Thinking? Here I find it: it is thought. This alone cannot be torn away from me. I am, I exist; that is certain. But for how long?
AT 27 Nempe quandiu cogito; nam forte etiam fieri posset, si cessarem ab omni cogitatione, ut illico totus esse desinerem. Nihil nunc admitto nisi quod necessario sit verum; sum igitur praecise tantùm res cogitans, id est, mens, sive animus, sive intellectus, sive ratio, voces mihi priùs significationis ignotae. Sum autem res vera, & vere existens; sed qualis res? Dixi, cogitans.	For as long as I am thinking. For perhaps it could even happen that, if I stopped all thinking, I would at once cease to exist altogether. I am now admitting nothing that is not necessarily true. I am, then, precisely speaking, only a thinking thing—that is, a mind, or intellect, or reason: words whose meaning I did not know before. But I am a real thing, and really existing. But what kind of thing? I have said it: a thinking thing.[1]
Quid praeterea? Imaginabor: non sum compages illa membrorum, quae corpus humanum appellatur; non sum	What else? I will imagine. I am not that framework of limbs called the human body. Nor am I some

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	etiam tenuis aliquis aër istis membris infusus, non ventus, non ignis, non vapor, non halitus, non quidquid mihi fingo: supposui enim ista nihil esse. Manet positio: nihilominus tamen ego aliquid sum. Fortassis verò contingit, ut haec ipsa, quae suppono nihil esse, quia mihi sunt ignota, tamen in rei veritate non differant ab eo me quem novi? Nescio, de hac re jam non disputo; de iis tantùm quae mihi nota sunt, judicium ferre possum. Novi me existere; quaero quis sim ego ille quem novi. Certissimum est hujus sic praecise sumpti notitiam non pendere ab iis quae exi [28] stere nondum novi; non igitur ab iis ullis, quae imaginatione effingo.	thin air infused into those limbs—not a wind, not a fire, not a vapor, not a breath, not anything I invent for myself; for I have supposed that these things are nothing. The supposition stands: nevertheless I am still something. Yet might it perhaps turn out that these very things which I suppose to be nothing, because they are unknown to me, are in truth no different from the I that I know? I do not know; I am not arguing about that now. I can pass judgment only on things that are known to me. I know that I exist; I am asking who this I is that I know. It is quite certain that knowledge of this I, taken precisely in this way, does not depend on things that I do not yet know to exist [28] —and so not on any of the things that I invent in imagination.
AT 28	Atque hoc verbum, effingo, admonet me erroris mei: nam fingerem reverà, si quid me esse imaginarer, quia nihil aliud est imaginari quàm rei corporeae figuram, seu imaginem, contemplari. Jam autem certò scio me esse, simulque fieri posse ut omnes istae imagines, & generaliter quaecunque ad corporis naturam referuntur, nihil sint praeter insomnia. Quibus animadversis, non minus ineptire videor, dicendo: imaginabor, ut distinctius agnoscam quisnam sim, quàm si dicerem: jam quidem sum experrectus, videoque nonnihil veri, sed quia nondum video satis evidenter, datâ operâ obdormiam, ut hoc ipsum mihi somnia verius evidentiusque repraesentent. Itaque cognosco nihil eorum quae possum imaginationis ope comprehendere, ad hanc quam de me habeo notitiam pertinere, mentemque ab illis diligentissime esse avocandam, ut suam ipsa naturam quàm distinctissime percipiat.	And this very word, "invent," reminds me of my error. For I really would be inventing if I imagined myself to be something, since imagining is nothing other than contemplating the shape, or image, of a corporeal thing. But I now know for certain that I exist, and at the same time that all these images, and in general whatever relates to the nature of body, may be nothing but dreams. Having noticed this, I seem no less foolish in saying, "I will imagine, so as to recognize more distinctly who I am," than if I were to say, "I am now awake, and I see something true; but since I do not yet see it evidently enough, I will deliberately go to sleep, so that my dreams may represent this very thing to me more truly and more evidently." So I recognize that none of the things I can grasp with the help of the imagination belongs to this knowledge I have of myself, and that the mind must be very carefully called away from them, so that it may perceive its own nature as distinctly as possible.

A THINKING THING

Descartes defines himself as a thinking thing that doubts, understands, wills, imagines and senses.

LATIN	ENGLISH
Sed quid igitur sum? Res cogitans. Quid est hoc? Nempe dubitans, intelligens, affirmans, negans, volens, nolens, imaginans quoque, & sentiens.	But what, then, am I? A thinking thing. What is that? A thing that doubts, understands, affirms, denies, wills, refuses, and also imagines and senses.
Non pauca sanè haec sunt, si cuncta ad me pertineant. Sed quidni pertinerent? Nonne ego ipse sum qui jam	That is certainly quite a lot, if all of it belongs to me. But why should it not? Am I not the very one

LATIN	ENGLISH
dubito ferè de omnibus, qui nonnihil tamen intelligo, qui hoc unum verum esse affirmo, nego caetera, cupio plura nosse, nolo decipi, multa vel invitus imaginor, multa etiam tanquam a sensibus venientia animadverto? Quid est horum, quamvis semper dor [29] miam, quamvis etiam is qui me creavit, quantum in se est, me deludat, quod non aeque verum sit ac me esse? Quid est quod a meâ cogitatione distinguatur? Quid est quod a me ipso separatum dici possit? Nam quod ego sim qui dubitem, qui intelligam, qui velim, tam manifestum est, ut nihil occurrat per quod evidentius explicetur.	who now doubts almost everything, who nonetheless understands something, who affirms that this one thing is true and denies the rest, who desires to know more, who does not want to be deceived, who imagines many things even against my will, and who also notices many things as if they came from the senses? Even if I am always asleep, [29] and even if the one who created me is deceiving me as far as he can, which of these is not just as true as that I exist? Which of them is distinct from my thought? Which of them can be said to be separate from myself? For that it is I who doubt, who understand, who will, is so obvious that nothing occurs to me by which it could be explained more evidently.
AT 29 Sed verò etiam ego idem sum qui imaginor; nam quamvis fortè, ut supposui, nulla prorsus res imaginata vera sit, vis tamen ipsa imaginandi revera existit, & cogitationis meae partem facit. Idem denique ego sum qui sentio, sive qui res corporeas tanquam per sensus animadverto: videlicet jam lucem video, strepitum audio, calorem sentio. Falsa haec sunt, dormio enim. At certe videre videor, audire, calescere. Hoc falsum esse non potest; hoc est proprie quod in me sentire appellatur; atque hoc praecise sic sumptum nihil aliud est quàm cogitare.	But I am also the same one who imagines. For even if, as I have supposed, perhaps no imagined thing at all is true, still the power of imagining itself really exists and forms part of my thought. Finally, I am the same one who senses, that is, who notices corporeal things as if through the senses. For instance, I now see light, hear a noise, feel heat. These things are false, since I am asleep. Yet I certainly seem to see, to hear, to be warmed. This cannot be false; this is what in me is properly called sensing; and this, taken precisely in this way, is nothing other than thinking.
Ex quibus equidem aliquanto melius incipio nosse quisnam sim; sed adhuc tamen videtur, nec possum abstinere quin putem, res corporeas, quarum imagines cogitatione formantur, & quas ipsi sensus explorant, multo distinctius agnosci quàm istud nescio quid meî, quod sub imaginationem non venit: quanquam profecto sit mirum, res quas animadverto esse dubias, ignotas, a me alienas, distinctius quàm quod verum est, quod cognitum, quàm denique me ipsum, a me comprehendi. Sed video quid sit: gaudet aberrare mens mea, necdum se patitur intra veritatis limites cohiberi. Esto igitur, & adhuc semel laxissimas habe [30] nas ei permittamus, ut, illis paulo post opportune reductis, facilius se regi patiatur.	From all this I am indeed beginning to know somewhat better who I am. But it still seems to me —and I cannot keep from thinking—that corporeal things, whose images are formed by thought and which the senses themselves explore, are known much more distinctly than this part of me, whatever it is, that does not come under the imagination. Yet it is surely strange that things I notice to be doubtful, unknown, and foreign to me should be grasped by me more distinctly than what is true, what is known—than, in short, myself. But I see what is going on: my mind enjoys wandering, and will not yet allow itself to be confined within the bounds of truth. Very well, then: let us once more give it the loosest possible [30] reins, so that when, a little later, they are drawn back at the right moment, it will more readily allow itself to be governed.

1 The Latin gives two words for mind here, mens and animus; this translation renders both as "mind."

THE PIECE OF WAX

Descartes examines a piece of wax and argues bodies are known by the intellect, not the senses.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
AT 30	Consideremus res illas quae vulgo putantur omnium distinctissime comprehendi: corpora scilicet, quae tangimus, quae videmus; non quidem corpora in communi, generales enim istae perceptiones aliquantò magis confusae esse solent, sed unum in particulari. Sumamus, exempli causâ, hanc ceram: nuperrime ex favis fuit educta; nondum amisit omnem saporem sui mellis; nonnihil retinet odoris florum ex quibus collecta est; ejus color, figura, magnitudo, manifesta sunt; dura est, frigida est, facile tangitur, ac, si articulo ferias, emittet sonum; omnia denique illi adsunt quae requiri videntur, ut corpus aliquod possit quàm distinctissime cognosci. Sed ecce, dum loquor, igni admovetur: saporis reliquiae purgantur, odor expirat, color mutatur, figura tollitur, crescit magnitudo, fit liquida, fit calida, vix tangi potest, nec jam, si pulses, emittet sonum. Remanetne adhuc eadem cera?	Let us consider the things that are commonly thought to be grasped most distinctly of all: namely bodies, which we touch and see. Not bodies in general, for such general perceptions tend to be somewhat more confused, but one body in particular. Take, for example, this wax. It has only just been taken from the honeycomb; it has not yet lost all the taste of its honey; it retains a little of the scent of the flowers from which it was gathered. Its color, shape, and size are plain to see. It is hard, it is cold, it is easy to handle, and if you tap it with your knuckle it will give off a sound. In short, it has everything that seems to be required for a body to be known as distinctly as possible. But look: while I am speaking, it is brought near the fire. What remains of the taste is purged away, the scent fades, the color changes, the shape is lost, the size increases; it becomes liquid, it becomes hot, it can scarcely be touched, and now if you strike it, it will give off no sound. Does the same wax still remain?
	Remanere fatendum est; nemo negat, nemo aliter putat. Quid erat igitur in eâ quod tam distincte comprehendebatur? Certe nihil eorum quae sensibus attingebam; nam quaecunque sub gustum, vel odoratum, vel visum, vel tactum, vel auditum veniebant, mutata jam sunt: remanet cera.	It must be admitted that it remains; no one denies it, no one thinks otherwise. What was there in it, then, that was grasped so distinctly? Certainly none of the things I reached with the senses; for whatever came under taste, or smell, or sight, or touch, or hearing has now changed—yet the wax remains.
	Fortassis illud erat quod nunc cogito: nempe ceram ipsam non quidem fuisse istam dulcedinem mellis, nec florum fragrantiam, nec istam albedinem, nec figuram, nec sonum, sed corpus quod mihi apparebat paulo ante modis istis conspicuum, nunc diversis. Quid est autem hoc praecise quod sic imaginor? Attenda [31] mus, &, remotis iis quae ad ceram non pertinent, videamus quid supersit: nempe nihil aliud quàm extensum quid, flexibile, mutabile. Quid verò est hoc flexibile, mutabile? An quod imaginor, hanc ceram ex figurâ rotundâ in quadratam, vel ex hac in triangularem verti posse? Nullo modo; nam innumerabilium ejusmodi mutationum capacem eam esse comprehendo, nec possum tamen innumerabiles imaginando percurrere; nec igitur comprehensio haec ab imaginandi facultate perficitur. Quid extensum? Nunquid etiam ipsa ejus extensio est ignota?	Perhaps it was what I now think: namely, that the wax itself was not that sweetness of honey, nor that fragrance of flowers, nor that whiteness, nor that shape, nor that sound, but a body that a little while ago appeared to me perceptible in those ways, and now in different ones. But what exactly is this thing that I imagine in this way? Let us attend [31] and, removing whatever does not belong to the wax, see what is left: nothing other than something extended, flexible, and changeable. But what is this "flexible" and "changeable"? Is it that I imagine that this wax can be changed from a round shape to a square one, or from that to a triangular one? Not at all. For I grasp that it is capable of countless changes of this kind, yet I cannot run through countless changes by imagining them; so

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	this grasp is not accomplished by the faculty of imagining. What about "extended"? Is not even its extension unknown?
AT 31 Nam in cerâ liquescente fit major, major in ferventi, majorque rursus, si calor augeatur; nec recte judicarem quid sit cera, nisi putarem hanc etiam plures secundùm extensionem varietates admittere, quàm fuerim unquam imaginando complexus. Superest igitur ut concedam, me nequidem imaginari quid sit haec cera, sed solâ mente percipere; dico hanc in particulari, de cerâ enim in communi clarius est. Quaenam verò est haec cera, quae non nisi mente percipitur? Nempe eadem quam video, quam tango, quam imaginor, eadem denique quam ab initio esse arbitrabar.	For in melting wax it becomes greater, greater still in boiling wax, and greater again if the heat is increased. And I would not judge correctly what wax is unless I thought that it also admits more variations in extension than I have ever encompassed by imagining. It remains, then, for me to grant that I do not even imagine what this wax is, but perceive it by the mind alone. I mean this particular wax; for the point is even clearer about wax in general. But what is this wax that is perceived only by the mind? Surely the same wax that I see, that I touch, that I imagine—the same, in short, that I believed it to be from the beginning.
Atqui, quod notandum est, ejus perceptio non visio, non tactio, non imaginatio est, nec unquam fuit, quamvis prius ita videretur, sed solius mentis inspectio, quae vel imperfecta esse potest & confusa, ut prius erat, vel clara & distincta, ut nunc est, prout minus vel magis ad illa ex quibus constat attendo.	But—and this should be noted—the perception of it is not seeing, not touching, not imagining, and never was, although it previously seemed so. It is an inspection by the mind alone, which can be imperfect and confused, as it was before, or clear and distinct, as it is now, depending on how much or how little I attend to the things of which the wax consists.
Miror verò interim quàm prona sit mea mens in errores; nam quamvis haec apud me tacitus & sine [32] voce considerem, haereo tamen in verbis ipsis, & fere decipior ab ipso usu loquendi. Dicimus enim nos videre ceram ipsammet, si adsit, non ex colore vel figurâ eam adesse judicare. Unde concluderem statim: ceram ergo visione oculi, non solius mentis inspectione, cognosci; nisi jam forte respexissem ex fenestrâ homines in plateâ transeuntes, quos etiam ipsos non minus usitate quàm ceram dico me videre. Quid autem video praeter pileos & vestes, sub quibus latere possent automata? Sed judico homines esse. Atque ita id quod putabam me videre oculis, solâ judicandi facultate, quae in mente meâ est, comprehendo.	Meanwhile I am amazed at how prone my mind is to errors. For although I am considering these things silently within myself and without [32] speaking, I nonetheless get stuck on words themselves and am nearly deceived by ordinary ways of speaking. For we say that we see the wax itself, if it is there, not that we judge it to be there from its color or shape. From this I would at once conclude that the wax is therefore known by the eye's vision, and not by an inspection of the mind alone—had I not just now happened to look out of the window at people passing in the street. Of them, too, I say, no less customarily than of the wax, that I see them. But what do I see besides hats and coats, under which there might be automata? Yet I judge that they are people. And so what I thought I was seeing with my eyes, I in fact grasp solely by the faculty of judging, which is in my mind.
AT 32 Sed pudeat supra vulgus sapere cupientem, ex formis loquendi quas vulgus invenit dubitationem quaesivisse; pergamusque deinceps, attendendo utrùm ego perfectius evidentiusque percipiebam quid esset cera, cùm primùm aspexi, credidique me illam ipso sensu externo, vel saltem sensu communi, ut vocant, id est potentiâ	But someone who wants to be wiser than the crowd should be ashamed to have looked for grounds for doubt in the forms of speech the crowd has invented. So let us go on, and consider whether I perceived what the wax was more perfectly and more evidently when I first looked at it

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imaginatrice, cognoscere? an verò potiùs nunc, postquam diligentiùs investigavi tum quid ea sit, tum quomodo cognoscatur? Certe hac de re dubitare esset ineptum; nam quid fuit in primâ perceptione distinctum? Quid quod non a quovis animali haberi posse videretur? At verò cùm ceram ab externis formis distinguo, & tanquam vestibus detractis nudam considero, sic illam revera, quamvis adhuc error in judicio meo esse possit, non possum tamen sine humanâ mente percipere. [33]	and believed that I knew it by the external sense itself, or at least by the common sense, as they call it—that is, by the imaginative power—or rather now, after I have investigated more carefully both what it is and how it is known. Surely it would be foolish to doubt this. For what was there in my first perception that was distinct? What was there that any animal could not apparently have had? But when I distinguish the wax from its external forms and consider it naked, as if its clothes had been stripped off, then, although there may still be error in my judgment, I really cannot perceive it in this way without a human mind. [33] [2]
AT 33 Quid autem dicam de hac ipsâ mente, sive de me ipso? Nihildum enim aliud admitto in me esse praeter mentem. Quid, inquam, ego qui hanc ceram videor tam distincte percipere? Nunquid me ipsum non tantùm multo verius, multo certius, sed etiam multo distinctius evidentiusque, cognosco? Nam, si judico ceram existere, ex eo quod hanc videam, certe multo evidentius efficitur me ipsum etiam existere, ex eo ipso quod hanc videam. Fieri enim potest ut hoc quod video non vere sit cera; fieri potest ut ne quidem oculos habeam, quibus quidquam videatur; sed fieri plane non potest, cùm videam, sive (quod jam non distinguo) cùm cogitem me videre, ut ego ipse cogitans non aliquid sim.	But what am I to say about this mind itself, that is, about myself? For as yet I admit nothing to be in me except a mind. What, I ask, of me, who seem to perceive this wax so distinctly? Do I not know myself not only much more truly and much more certainly, but also much more distinctly and evidently? For if I judge that the wax exists from the fact that I see it, it certainly follows much more evidently, from this very fact that I see it, that I myself exist. For it may be that what I see is not really wax; it may be that I do not even have eyes with which anything is seen. But it is quite impossible, when I see, or (which I am not now distinguishing) when I think I see, that I myself who am thinking should not be something.
Simili ratione, si judico ceram esse, ex eo quod hanc tangam, idem rursus efficietur, videlicet me esse. Si ex eo quod imaginer, vel quâvis aliâ ex causâ, idem plane. Sed & hoc ipsum quod de cerâ animadverto, ad reliqua omnia, quae sunt extra me posita, licet applicare. Porro autem, si magis distincta visa sit cerae perceptio, postquam mihi, non ex solo visu vel tactu, sed pluribus ex causis innotuit, quanto distinctiùs me ipsum a me nunc cognosci fatendum est, quandoquidem nullae rationes vel ad cerae, vel ad cujuspiam alterius corporis perceptionem possint juvare, quin eaedem omnes mentis meae naturam melius probent!	By the same reasoning, if I judge that the wax exists from the fact that I touch it, the same thing will follow once again, namely that I exist. If I judge it from the fact that I imagine it, or for any other reason, exactly the same. And what I notice about the wax can be applied to everything else located outside me. Moreover, if my perception of the wax seemed more distinct after it became known to me not from sight or touch alone but from several causes, how much more distinctly must I admit that I now know myself! For no reasons can help toward the perception of the wax, or of any other body, without all those same reasons proving the nature of my mind still better.
Sed & alia insuper tam multa sunt in ipsâ mente, ex quibus ejus notitia distinctior reddi potest, ut ea, quae ex corpore ad illam emanant, vix numeranda videantur.	And besides, there are so many other things in the mind itself by which knowledge of it can be made more distinct, that the things which flow into it from the body hardly seem worth counting.

2 The "common sense" (sensus communis) was, in the scholastic psychology of the day, the inner faculty thought to combine the reports of the separate senses.

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Atque ecce tandem sponte sum reversus eò quò [34] volebam; nam cùm mihi nunc notum sit ipsamet corpora, non proprie a sensibus, vel ab imaginandi facultate, sed a solo intellectu percipi, nec ex eo percipi quòd tangantur aut videantur, sed tantùm ex eo quod intelligantur aperte cognosco nihil facilius aut evidentius meâ mente posse a me percipi. Sed quia tam cito deponi veteris opinionis consuetudo non potest, placet hîc consistere, ut altius haec nova cognitio memoriae meae diuturnitate meditationis infigatur.

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And look: at last I have come back of my own accord to where [34] I wanted to be. For I now know that bodies themselves are perceived, properly speaking, not by the senses or by the faculty of imagining but by the intellect alone, and that they are perceived not because they are touched or seen but only because they are understood. So I plainly recognize that nothing can be perceived by me more easily or more evidently than my own mind. But since the habit of an old opinion cannot be laid aside so quickly, I would like to pause here, so that by lengthy meditation this new knowledge may be fixed more deeply in my memory.

Third Meditation

God, and that he exists
Descartes argues from his idea of an infinite, perfect being that God exists.

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AT 34	Claudam nunc oculos, aures obturabo, avocabo omnes sensus, imagines etiam rerum corporalium omnes vel ex cogitatione meâ delebo, vel certe, quia hoc fieri vix potest, illas ut inanes & falsas nihili pendam, meque solum alloquendo & penitius inspiciendo, meipsum paulatim mihi magis notum & familiarem reddere conabor. Ego sum res cogitans, id est dubitans, affirmans, negans, pauca intelligens, multa ignorans, volens, nolens, imaginans etiam & sentiens; ut enim ante animadverti, quamvis illa quae sentio vel imaginor extra me fortasse nihil sint, illos tamen cogitandi modos, quos sensus & imaginationes [35] appello, quatenus cogitandi quidam modi tantùm sunt, in me esse sum certus.	I will now close my eyes, stop my ears, and call away all my senses. I will even erase from my thought all images of corporeal things—or at least, since that can hardly be done, I will regard them as empty and false and count them as nothing. And by talking with myself alone and looking more deeply into myself, I will try gradually to make myself better known and more familiar to myself. I am a thinking thing: that is, a thing that doubts, affirms, denies, understands a few things, is ignorant of many, wills, refuses, and also imagines and senses. For as I noted before, even though the things I sense or imagine may perhaps be nothing outside me, still I am certain that those modes of thinking which I call sensations and imaginations, [35] insofar as they are simply modes of thinking, are in me.

CLEAR AND DISTINCT PERCEPTION

Descartes proposes that whatever he perceives clearly and distinctly is true and sorts his ideas by origin.

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AT 35	Atque his paucis omnia recensui quae vere scio, vel saltem quae me scire hactenus animadverti. Nunc circumspiciam diligentiùs an forte adhuc apud me alia sint ad quae nondum respexi. Sum certus me esse rem cogitantem. Nunquid ergo etiam scio quid requiratur ut de aliquâ re sim certus? Nempe in hac primâ cognitione nihil aliud est, quàm clara quaedam & distincta perceptio ejus quòd affirmo; quae sane non sufficeret ad me certum de rei veritate reddendum, si posset unquam contingere, ut aliquid, quòd ita clare & distincte perciperem, falsum esset; ac proinde jam videor pro regulâ generali posse statuere, illud omne esse verum, quòd valde clare & distincte percipio.	With these few words I have reviewed everything I truly know, or at least everything I have so far noticed that I know. Now I will look around more carefully to see whether there may be other things in me that I have not yet considered. I am certain that I am a thinking thing. Do I not therefore also know what is required for me to be certain of anything? In this first knowledge there is nothing but a certain clear and distinct perception of what I affirm. This would certainly not be enough to make me certain of the truth of the matter if it could ever happen that something I perceived so clearly and distinctly was false. And so I now seem able to lay down as a general rule that whatever I perceive very clearly and distinctly is true.
	Verumtamen multa prius ut omnino certa & manifesta admisi, quae tamen postea dubia esse deprehendi. Qualia	Yet I previously accepted as wholly certain and evident many things that I later found to be doubt-

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ergo ista fuere? Nempe terra, coelum, sydera & caetera omnia quae sensibus usurpabam. Quid autem de illis clare percipiebam? Nempe ipsas talium rerum ideas, sive cogitationes, menti meae obversari. Sed ne nunc quidem illas ideas in me esse inficior. Aliud autem quiddam erat quòd affirmabam, quòdque etiam ob consuetudinem credendi clare me percipere arbitrabar, quòd tamen revera non percipiebam: nempe res quasdam extra me esse, a quibus ideae istae procedebant, & quibus omnino similes erant. Atque hoc erat, in quo vel fallebar, vel certe, si verum judicabam, id non ex vi meae perceptionis contingebat.

Quid verò? Cùm circa res Arithmeticas vel Geome [36] tricas aliquid valde simplex & facile considerabam, ut quòd duo & tria simul juncta sint quinque, vel similia, nunquid saltem illa satis perspicue intuebar, ut vera esse affirmarem? Equidem non aliam ob causam de iis dubitandum esse postea judicavi, quàm quia veniebat in mentem forte aliquem Deum talem mihi naturam indere potuisse, ut etiam circa illa deciperer, quae manifestissima viderentur. Sed quoties haec praeconcepta de summâ Dei potentiâ opinio mihi occurrit, non possum non fateri, siquidem velit, facile illi esse efficere ut errem, etiam in iis quae me puto mentis oculis quàm evidentissime intueri.

AT 36 Quoties verò ad ipsas res, quas valde clare percipere arbitror, me converto, tam plane ab illis persuadeor, ut sponte erumpam in has voces: fallat me quisquis potest, nunquam tamen efficiet ut nihil sim, quandiu me aliquid esse cogitabo; vel ut aliquando verum sit me nunquam fuisse, cùm jam verum sit me esse; vel forte etiam ut duo & tria simul juncta plura vel pauciora sint quàm quinque, vel similia, in quibus scilicet repugnantiam agnosco manifestam. Et certe cùm nullam occasionem habeam existimandi aliquem Deum esse deceptorem, nec quidem adhuc satis sciam utrùm sit aliquis Deus, valde tenuis &, ut ita loquar, Metaphysica dubitandi ratio est, quae tantùm ex eâ opinione dependet.

Ut autem etiam illa tollatur, quamprimum occurret occasio, examinare debeo an sit Deus, &, si sit, an possit

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ful. What were these, then? The earth, the sky, the stars, and all the other things I took in through the senses. But what did I clearly perceive about them? Only that the ideas, or thoughts, of such things were present to my mind. And even now I do not deny that those ideas are in me. But there was something else that I used to affirm, and that, through the habit of believing it, I thought I perceived clearly, though in fact I did not perceive it: namely, that there were certain things outside me from which those ideas proceeded and which they wholly resembled. And this was where I was either mistaken or, at any rate, if I was judging truly, that did not come about through the strength of my perception.

What, then? When I was considering something very simple and easy in arithmetic or geometry, [36] such as that two and three added together make five, or the like, did I not at least see these things clearly enough to affirm that they were true? Indeed, the only reason I later judged that they should be doubted was that it occurred to me that some God could perhaps have given me a nature such that I was deceived even about the things that seemed most evident. But whenever this preconceived opinion about the supreme power of God comes to mind, I cannot help admitting that, if he wished, it would be easy for him to make me go wrong even in the things I think I see most evidently with the eyes of the mind.

But whenever I turn to the very things that I think I perceive very clearly, I am so thoroughly persuaded by them that I spontaneously burst out with these words: Let whoever can deceive me; he will still never bring it about that I am nothing, so long as I think that I am something; or that it should ever be true that I never existed, since it is now true that I exist; or perhaps even that two and three added together should be more or less than five, or anything of the kind, in which I recognize an evident contradiction. And certainly, since I have no reason for thinking that some God is a deceiver, and do not yet even know well enough whether there is any God at all, a reason for doubting that depends solely on this opinion is very slight and, so to speak, metaphysical.

But in order to remove even this reason, as soon as the opportunity arises I must examine whether

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esse deceptor; hac enim re ignoratâ, non videor de ullâ aliâ plane certus esse unquam posse.

Nunc autem ordo videtur exigere, ut prius omnes [37] meas cogitationes in certa genera distribuam, & in quibusnam ex illis veritas aut falsitas proprie consistat, inquiram. Quaedam ex his tanquam rerum imagines sunt, quibus solis proprie convenit ideae nomen: ut cùm hominem, vel Chimaeram, vel Coelum, vel Angelum, vel Deum cogito. Aliae verò alias quasdam praeterea formas habent: ut, cùm volo, cùm timeo, cùm affirmo, cùm nego, semper quidem aliquam rem ut subjectum meae cogitationis apprehendo, sed aliquid etiam amplius quàm istius rei similitudinem cogitatione complector; & ex his aliae voluntates, sive affectus, aliae autem judicia appellantur.

AT 37 Jam quod ad ideas attinet, si solae in se spectentur, nec ad aliud quid illas referam, falsae proprie esse non possunt; nam sive capram, sive chimaeram imaginer, non minus verum est me unam imaginari quàm alteram. Nulla etiam in ipsâ voluntate, vel affectibus, falsitas est timenda; nam, quamvis prava, quamvis etiam ea quae nusquam sunt, possim optare, non tamen ideo non verum est illa me optare. Ac proinde sola supersunt judicia, in quibus mihi cavendum est ne fallar.

Praecipuus autem error & frequentissimus qui possit in illis reperiri, consistit in eo quòd ideas, quae in me sunt, judicem rebus quibusdam extra me positis similes esse sive conformes; nam profecto, si tantùm ideas ipsas ut cogitationis meae quosdam modos considerarem, nec ad quidquam aliud referrem, vix mihi ullam errandi materiam dare possent.

Ex his autem ideis aliae innatae, aliae adventitiae, [38] aliae a me ipso factae mihi videntur: nam quòd intelligam quid sit res, quid sit veritas, quid sit cogitatio, haec non aliunde habere videor quàm ab ipsâmet meâ naturâ; quòd autem nunc strepitum audiam, solem videam, ignem sentiam, a rebus quibusdam extra me positis procedere hactenus judicavi; ac denique Syrenes, Hippogryphes, & similia, a me ipso finguntur. Vel forte etiam omnes esse adventitias possum putare, vel omnes innatas, vel omnes factas: nondum enim veram illarum originem clare perspexi.

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there is a God, and, if there is, whether he can be a deceiver. For as long as this is unknown, it seems I can never be fully certain of anything else.

But now order seems to require that I first [37] divide all my thoughts into definite kinds, and ask in which of them truth or falsity properly lies. Some of them are like images of things, and to these alone the name "idea" properly applies: as when I think of a man, or a chimera, or the sky, or an angel, or God. Others have certain other forms in addition. When I will, when I fear, when I affirm, when I deny, I always apprehend some thing as the subject of my thought, but I also take in with my thought something more than the likeness of that thing. Of these, some are called volitions, or emotions, and others judgments.

Now as far as ideas are concerned, if they are considered solely in themselves and I do not refer them to anything else, they cannot, properly speaking, be false; for whether I imagine a goat or a chimera, it is no less true that I imagine the one than the other. Nor is there any falsity to fear in the will itself or in the emotions; for although I may desire wicked things, or even things that exist nowhere, it is still true that I desire them. So only judgments remain, and in them I must take care not to be deceived.

Now the chief and most frequent error that can be found in them consists in my judging that the ideas in me resemble or conform to certain things located outside me. For certainly, if I considered the ideas themselves simply as certain modes of my thought, and did not refer them to anything else, they could hardly give me any material for error.

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	Of these ideas, some seem to me innate, some adventitious, [38] and some made by me myself. For my understanding what a thing is, what truth is, what thought is, seems to come from nowhere else than my own nature. But my now hearing a noise, seeing the sun, feeling the fire—these I have so far judged to proceed from certain things located outside me. And finally, sirens, hippogriffs, and the like are invented by me. Or perhaps I can even think that they are all adventitious, or all innate, or all made by me; for I have not yet clearly seen their true origin.[1]
AT 38 Sed hîc praecipue de iis est quaerendum, quas tanquam a rebus extra me existentibus desumptas considero, quaenam me moveat ratio ut illas istis rebus similes esse existimem. Nempe ita videor doctus a naturâ. Et praeterea experior illas non a meâ voluntate nec proinde a me ipso pendere; saepe enim vel invito obversantur: ut jam, sive velim, sive nolim, sentio calorem, & ideo puto sensum illum, sive ideam caloris, a re a me diversâ, nempe ab ignis cui assideo calore, mihi advenire. Nihilque magis obvium est, quàm ut huc judicem istam rem suam similitudinem potius quàm aliud quid in me immittere.	But here I must chiefly ask, concerning the ideas that I consider as derived from things existing outside me, what reason leads me to think they resemble those things. Well, I seem to have been taught so by nature. And besides, I find by experience that they do not depend on my will, and hence not on me myself; for they often present themselves even against my will. Right now, for instance, whether I want to or not, I feel heat, and so I think that this sensation, or idea of heat, comes to me from a thing distinct from me, namely from the heat of the fire I am sitting by. And nothing is more obvious than for me to judge from this that the thing sends into me its own likeness rather than anything else.
Quae rationes, an satis firmae sint, jam videbo. Cùm hîc dico me ita doctum esse a naturâ, intelligo tantùm spontaneo quòdam impetu me ferri ad hoc credendum, non lumine aliquo naturali mihi ostendi esse verum. Quae duo multum discrepant; nam quaecumque lumine naturali mihi ostenduntur, ut quòd ex eo quòd dubitem, sequatur me esse, & similia, nullo modo dubia esse possunt, quia nulla alia facultas esse potest, cui aeque fidam ac lumini isti, quaeque illa [39] non vera esse possit docere; sed quantum ad impetus naturales, jam saepe olim judicavi me ab illis in deteriorem partem fuisse impulsum, cùm de bono eligendo ageretur, nec video cur iisdem in ullâ aliâ re magis fidam.	Whether these reasons are firm enough, I will now see. When I say here that I have been taught so by nature, I mean only that I am carried by a certain spontaneous impulse to believe it, not that it is shown to me to be true by some natural light. These two things differ a great deal. For whatever is shown to me by the natural light—for instance, that from the fact that I doubt it follows that I exist, and the like—can in no way be doubtful, because there can be no other faculty that I trust as much as that light, and that could teach me that these things [39] are not true. But as for natural impulses, I have often judged in the past that they pushed me toward the worse side when it was a matter of choosing the good, and I do not see why I should trust them any more in any other matter.
AT 39 Deinde, quamvis ideae illae a voluntate meâ non pendeant, non ideo constat ipsas a rebus extra me positis necessario procedere. Ut enim impetus illi, de quibus	Next, even though those ideas do not depend on my will, it does not follow that they necessarily proceed from things located outside me. For just

1 "Adventitious" (adventitiae): coming to the mind from outside, as opposed to innate or self-made.

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	mox loquebar, quamvis in me sint, a voluntate tamen meâ diversi esse videntur, ita forte etiam aliqua alia est in me facultas, nondum mihi satis cognita, istarum idearum effectrix, ut hactenus semper visum est illas, dum somnio, absque ullâ rerum externarum ope, in me formari.	as the impulses I was speaking of a moment ago, though they are in me, nonetheless seem to be distinct from my will, so perhaps there is also some other faculty in me, not yet well enough known to me, that produces these ideas—just as it has always seemed up to now that they are formed in me while I dream, without any help from external things.
	Ac denique, quamvis a rebus a me diversis procederent, non inde sequitur illas rebus istis similes esse debere. Quinimo in multis saepe magnum discrimen videor deprehendisse: ut, exempli causâ, duas diversas solis ideas apud me invenio, unam tanquam a sensibus haustam, & quae maxime inter illas quas adventitias existimo est recensenda, per quam mihi valde parvus apparet, aliam verò ex rationibus Astronomiae desumptam, hoc est ex notionibus quibusdam mihi innatis elicitam, vel quocumque alio modo a me factam, per quam aliquoties major quàm terra exhibetur; utraque profecto similis eidem soli extra me existenti esse non potest, & ratio persuadet illam ei maxime esse dissimilem, quae quàm proxime ab ipso videtur emanasse.	And finally, even if they did proceed from things distinct from me, it does not follow that they must resemble those things. On the contrary, in many cases I think I have often found a great discrepancy. For example, I find in myself two different ideas of the sun. One, drawn as it were from the senses, and to be counted above all among the ideas I regard as adventitious, makes the sun appear very small to me. The other, derived from the reasonings of astronomy—that is, elicited from certain notions innate in me, or made by me in some other way—shows it to be several times larger than the earth. Certainly both cannot resemble the same sun existing outside me; and reason persuades me that the one which seems to have flowed most directly from the sun itself is the one that least resembles it.
	Quae omnia satis demonstrant me non hactenus ex [40] certo judicio, sed tantùm ex caeco aliquo impulsu, credidisse res quasdam a me diversas existere, quae ideas sive imagines suas per organa sensuum, vel quolibet alio pacto, mihi immittant.	All this shows clearly enough that until now I have believed, not [40] from any certain judgment, but only from some blind impulse, that there exist certain things distinct from me which send their ideas or images into me through the sense organs or in some other way.

DEGREES OF REALITY

Descartes argues that the cause of an idea must contain at least as much reality as the idea represents.

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AT 40	Sed alia quaedam adhuc via mihi occurrit ad inquirendum an res aliquae, ex iis quarum ideae in me sunt, extra me existant. Nempe, quatenus ideae istae cogitandi quidam modi tantùm sunt, non agnosco ullam inter ipsas inaequalitatem, & omnes a me eodem modo procedere videntur; sed, quatenus una unam rem, alia aliam repraesentat, patet easdem esse ab invicem valde diversas. Nam proculdubio illae quae substantias mihi exhibent, majus aliquid sunt, atque, ut ita loquar, plus realitatis objectivae in se continent, quàm illae quae tantùm modos, sive accidentia, repraesentant; & rursus illa per quam summum aliquem Deum, aeternum,	But yet another way occurs to me of inquiring whether any of the things whose ideas are in me exist outside me. Insofar as these ideas are simply modes of thinking, I recognize no inequality among them, and they all seem to proceed from me in the same way. But insofar as one represents one thing and another represents another, it is clear that they differ greatly from one another. For undoubtedly the ideas that present substances to me are something more and, so to speak, contain more objective reality in themselves than those that represent only modes, or accidents. And

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infinitum, omniscium, omnipotentem, rerumque omnium, quae praeter ipsum sunt, creatorem intelligo, plus profecto realitatis objectivae in se habet, quàm illae per quas finitae substantiae exhibentur.

Jam verò lumine naturali manifestum est tantumdem ad minimum esse debere in causâ efficiente & totali, quantum in ejusdem causae effectu. Nam, quaeso, undenam posset assumere realitatem suam effectus, nisi a causâ? Et quomodo illam ei causa dare posset, nisi etiam haberet? Hinc autem sequitur, nec posse aliquid a nihilo fieri, nec etiam id quod magis perfectum est, hoc est quod plus realitatis in se con [41] tinet, ab eo quod minus. Atque hoc non modo perspicue verum est de iis effectibus, quorum realitas est actualis sive formalis, sed etiam de ideis, in quibus consideratur tantùm realitas objectiva.

AT 41 Hoc est, non modo non potest, exempli causâ, aliquis lapis, qui prius non fuit, nunc incipere esse, nisi producatur ab aliquâ re in quâ totum illud sit vel formaliter vel eminenter, quod ponitur in lapide; nec potest calor in subjectum quod priùs non calebat induci, nisi a re quae sit ordinis saltem aeque perfecti atque est calor, & sic de caeteris; sed praeterea etiam non potest in me esse idea caloris, vel lapidis, nisi in me posita sit ab aliquâ causâ, in quâ tantumdem ad minimum sit realitatis quantum esse in calore vel lapide concipio.

Nam quamvis ista causa nihil de suâ realitate actuali sive formali in meam ideam transfundat, non ideo putandum est illam minus realem esse debere, sed talem esse naturam ipsius ideae, ut nullam aliam ex se realitatem formalem exigat, praeter illam quam mutuatur a cogitatione meâ, cujus est modus. Quòd autem haec idea realitatem objectivam hanc vel illam contineat potius quàm aliam, hoc profectò habere debet ab aliquâ causâ in quâ tantumdem sit ad minimum realitatis formalis quantum ipsa continet objectivae. Si enim ponamus aliquid in ideâ reperiri, quod non fuerit in ejus causâ, hoc igitur habet a nihilo; atqui quantumvis imperfectus sit iste essendi modus, quo res est objective in intellectu per ideam, non tamen profectò plane nihil est, nec proinde a nihilo esse potest.

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again, the idea by which I understand a supreme God—eternal, infinite, omniscient, omnipotent, and creator of all things that exist besides himself—certainly has more objective reality in it than the ideas by which finite substances are presented.

Now it is manifest by the natural light that there must be at least as much in the efficient and total cause as in the effect of that same cause. For where, I ask, could the effect get its reality, if not from the cause? And how could the cause give it that reality, unless it also had it? From this it follows both that something cannot come from nothing, and also that what is more perfect—that is, what contains [41] more reality in itself—cannot come from what is less perfect. And this is plainly true not only of those effects whose reality is actual or formal, but also of ideas, in which only objective reality is considered.

That is to say: not only can a stone, for example, which did not exist before, not begin to exist now unless it is produced by some thing in which there is, either formally or eminently, everything that is found in the stone; and not only can heat not be brought into a subject that was not hot before except by a thing of an order at least as perfect as heat, and so on for the rest; but in addition, the idea of heat, or of a stone, cannot be in me unless it has been placed in me by some cause in which there is at least as much reality as I conceive to be in the heat or the stone.[2]

For although this cause transfers none of its actual or formal reality into my idea, I should not therefore think that the cause must be less real. Rather, the nature of an idea is such that of itself it requires no formal reality other than what it borrows from my thought, of which it is a mode. But that this idea contains this or that objective reality rather than another, it must surely get from some cause in which there is at least as much formal reality as the idea contains objective reality. For if we suppose that something is found in the idea that was not in its cause, then the idea gets this from nothing. Yet however imperfect this mode of being may be, by which a thing is objectively in the intellect through an idea, it is certainly not

2 A cause contains something "formally" when it has it in the same form as the effect, and "eminently" when it has it in a higher form capable of producing it.

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nothing at all, and so it cannot come from nothing.

Nec etiam debeo suspicari, cùm realitas quam considero in meis ideis sit tantùm objectiva, non opus [42] esse ut eadem realitas sit formaliter in causis istarum idearum, sed sufficere, si sit in iis etiam objective. Nam quemadmodum iste modus essendi objectivus competit ideis ex ipsarum naturâ, ita modus essendi formalis competit idearum causis, saltem primis & praecipuis, ex earum naturâ. Et quamvis forte una idea ex aliâ nasci possit, non tamen hîc datur progressus in infinitum, sed tandem ad aliquam primam debet deveniri, cujus causa sit instar archetypi, in quo omnis realitas formaliter contineatur, quae est in ideâ tantùm objective.

Nor should I suspect that, since the reality I consider in my ideas is only objective, it is not [42] necessary for the same reality to be formally in the causes of those ideas, but that it is enough if it is in them objectively as well. For just as this objective mode of being belongs to ideas by their very nature, so the formal mode of being belongs to the causes of ideas—at least to the first and principal ones—by their nature. And although one idea may perhaps arise from another, there can be no infinite regress here; eventually we must arrive at some first idea, whose cause is like an archetype, in which all the reality that is in the idea only objectively is contained formally.

AT 42 Adeo ut lumine naturali mihi sit perspicuum ideas in me esse veluti quasdam imagines, quae possunt quidem facile deficere a perfectione rerum a quibus sunt desumptae, non autem quicquam majus aut perfectius continere.

So it is clear to me by the natural light that the ideas in me are like images, which can indeed easily fall short of the perfection of the things from which they were taken, but cannot contain anything greater or more perfect.

Atque haec omnia, quò diutius & curiosius examino, tantò clarius & distinctius vera esse cognosco. Sed quid tandem ex his concludam? Nempe si realitas objectiva alicujus ex meis ideis sit tanta ut certus sim eandem nec formaliter nec eminenter in me esse, nec proinde me ipsum ejus ideae causam esse posse, hinc necessario sequi, non me solum esse in mundo, sed aliquam aliam rem, quae istius ideae est causa, etiam existere. Si verò nulla talis in me idea reperiatur, nullum plane habebo argumentum quod me de alicujus rei a me diversae existentiâ certum reddat; omnia enim diligentissime circumspexi, & nullum aliud potui hactenus reperire.

The longer and more carefully I examine all this, the more clearly and distinctly I recognize that it is true. But what, in the end, shall I conclude from it? This: if the objective reality of any one of my ideas is so great that I am certain it is not in me either formally or eminently, and hence that I myself cannot be the cause of that idea, then it necessarily follows that I am not alone in the world, but that some other thing, which is the cause of that idea, also exists. But if no such idea is found in me, I will have no argument at all to make me certain of the existence of any thing distinct from myself. For I have looked around most carefully, and so far I have been able to find no other.

Ex his autem meis ideis, praeter illam quae me ipsum mihi exhibet, de quâ hîc nulla difficultas esse [43] potest, alia est quae Deum, aliae quae res corporeas & inanimes, aliae quae Angelos, aliae quae animalia, ac denique aliae quae alios homines meî similes repraesentant.

Now among these ideas of mine, besides the one that presents me to myself, about which there can be no difficulty [43] here, there is one that represents God, others that represent corporeal and inanimate things, others angels, others animals, and finally others that represent other human beings like myself.

AT 43 Et quantum ad ideas quae alios homines, vel animalia, vel Angelos exhibent, facile intelligo illas ex iis quas habeo meî ipsius & rerum corporalium & Dei posse componi, quamvis nulli praeter me homines, nec animalia, nec Angeli, in mundo essent.

As for the ideas that present other human beings, or animals, or angels, I easily understand that they could be put together from the ideas I have of myself, of corporeal things, and of God, even if there

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were no human beings besides me in the world, and no animals, and no angels.

Quantum autem ad ideas rerum corporalium, nihil in illis occurrit, quod sit tantum ut non videatur a me ipso potuisse proficisci; nam si penitiùs inspiciam, & singulas examinem eo modo quo heri examinavi ideam cerae, animadverto perpauca tantùm esse quae in illis clare & distincte percipio: nempe magnitudinem, sive extensionem in longum, latum, & profundum; figuram, quae ex terminatione istius extensionis exsurgit; situm, quem diversa figurata inter se obtinent; & motum, sive mutationem istius sitûs; quibus addi possunt substantia, duratio, & numerus: caetera autem, ut lumen & colores, soni, odores, sapores, calor & frigus, aliaeque tactiles qualitates, nonnisi valde confuse & obscure a me cogitantur, adeo ut etiam ignorem an sint verae, vel falsae, hoc est, an ideae, quas de illis habeo, sint rerum quarundam ideae, an non rerum.

As for the ideas of corporeal things, there is nothing in them so great that it seems it could not have come from me myself. For if I look into them more deeply, and examine each one in the way I examined the idea of the wax yesterday, I notice that there are only very few things in them that I perceive clearly and distinctly: namely, size, or extension in length, breadth, and depth; shape, which arises from the bounding of that extension; position, which the various shaped things have relative to one another; and motion, or change of that position. To these can be added substance, duration, and number. But everything else—light and colors, sounds, smells, tastes, heat and cold, and the other tactile qualities—I think of only in a very confused and obscure way, so much so that I do not even know whether they are true or false, that is, whether the ideas I have of them are ideas of things or of non-things.

Quamvis enim falsitatem proprie dictam, sive formalem, nonnisi in judiciis posse reperiri paulo ante notaverim, est tamen profecto quaedam alia falsitas materialis in ideis, cùm non rem tanquam rem repraesentant: ita, exempli causâ, ideae quas habeo caloris & frigoris, tam parum clarae [44] & distinctae sunt, ut ab iis discere non possim, an frigus sit tantùm privatio caloris, vel calor privatio frigoris, vel utrumque sit realis qualitas, vel neutrum. Et quia nullae ideae nisi tanquam rerum esse possunt, siquidem verum sit frigus nihil aliud esse quàm privationem caloris, idea quae mihi illud tanquam reale quid & positivum repraesentat, non immerito falsa dicetur, & sic de caeteris.

For although I noted a little earlier that falsity properly so called, or formal falsity, can be found only in judgments, there is certainly another kind of falsity in ideas, material falsity, when they represent what is not a thing as if it were a thing. Thus, for example, the ideas I have of heat and cold are so far from clear [44] and distinct that I cannot learn from them whether cold is merely the privation of heat, or heat the privation of cold, or whether both are real qualities, or neither. And since there can be no ideas that are not, as it were, ideas of things, if it is true that cold is nothing but the privation of heat, then the idea that represents it to me as something real and positive will rightly be called false; and so on for the rest.

AT 44 Quibus profecto non est necesse ut aliquem authorem a me diversum assignem; nam, si quidem sint falsae, hoc est nullas res repraesentent, lumine naturali notum mihi est illas a nihilo procedere, hoc est, non aliam ob causam in me esse quàm quia deest aliquid naturae meae, nec est plane perfecta; si autem sint verae, quia tamen tam parum realitatis mihi exhibent, ut ne quidem illud a non re possim distinguere, non video cur a me ipso esse non possint.

For these ideas I certainly need not posit any author distinct from myself. For if they are false, that is, if they represent no things, I know by the natural light that they come from nothing—that is, that they are in me only because something is lacking in my nature, which is not wholly perfect. If, on the other hand, they are true, then since they present so little reality to me that I cannot even distinguish it from a non-thing, I do not see why they could not come from me myself.

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Ex iis verò quae in ideis rerum corporalium clara & distincta sunt, quaedam ab ideâ meî ipsius videor mutuari potuisse, nempe substantiam, durationem, numerum, & si quae alia sint ejusmodi; nam cùm cogito lapidem esse substantiam, sive esse rem quae per se apta est existere, itemque me esse substantiam, quamvis concipiam me esse rem cogitantem & non extensam, lapidem verò esse rem extensam & non cogitantem, ac proinde maxima inter utrumque conceptum sit diversitas, in ratione tamen substantiae videntur convenire; itemque, cùm percipio me nunc esse, & priùs etiam aliquamdiu fuisse recordor, cùmque varias habeo cogitationes quarum numerum intelligo, acquiro [45] ideas durationis & numeri, quas deinde ad quascunque alias res possum transferre.

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Of the things that are clear and distinct in the ideas of corporeal things, some I seem to have been able to borrow from the idea of myself: namely substance, duration, number, and anything else of that kind. For when I think that a stone is a substance, or a thing capable of existing by itself, and likewise that I am a substance, then although I conceive of myself as a thinking thing and not an extended one, and of the stone as an extended thing and not a thinking one, so that the two concepts differ enormously, they nevertheless seem to agree in the respect of being substance. Likewise, when I perceive that I exist now, and recall that I have also existed for some time before, and when I have various thoughts whose number I understand, I acquire [45] the ideas of duration and number, which I can then transfer to any other things whatever.

AT 45

Caetera autem omnia ex quibus rerum corporearum ideae conflantur, nempe extensio, figura, situs, & motus, in me quidem, cùm nihil aliud sim quàm res cogitans, formaliter non continentur; sed quia sunt tantùm modi quidam substantiae, ego autem substantia, videntur in me contineri posse eminenter.

But all the rest of which the ideas of corporeal things are composed—namely extension, shape, position, and motion—are not contained in me formally, since I am nothing but a thinking thing. But because they are only certain modes of a substance, and I am a substance, it seems they can be contained in me eminently.

THE IDEA OF GOD

Descartes argues that his idea of an infinite God could only have come from God himself.

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Itaque sola restat idea Dei, in quâ considerandum est an aliquid sit quod a me ipso non potuerit proficisci. Dei nomine intelligo substantiam quandam infinitam, independentem, summe intelligentem, summe potentem, & a quâ tum ego ipse, tum aliud omne, si quid aliud extat, quodcumque extat, est creatum. Quae sane omnia talia sunt ut, quo diligentius attendo, tanto minus a me solo profecta esse posse videantur. Ideoque ex antedictis, Deum necessario existere, est concludendum.

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So there remains only the idea of God, in which I must consider whether there is anything that could not have come from me myself. By the name "God" I understand a certain substance that is infinite, independent, supremely intelligent, supremely powerful, and by which both I myself and everything else that exists—if anything else does exist—was created. All these attributes are such that the more carefully I attend to them, the less it seems possible that they came from me alone. And so, from what has been said, it must be concluded that God necessarily exists.

Nam quamvis substantiae quidem idea in me sit ex hoc ipso quòd sim substantia, non tamen idcirco esset idea substantiae infinitae, cùm sim finitus, nisi ab aliquâ substantiâ, quae revera esset infinita, procederet.

For although the idea of substance is in me by the very fact that I am a substance, it would not on that account be the idea of an infinite substance, since I am finite, unless it came from some substance that really was infinite.

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Nec putare debeo me non percipere infinitum per veram ideam, sed tantùm per negationem finiti, ut percipio quietem & tenebras per negationem motûs & lucis; nam contrà manifeste intelligo plus realitatis esse in substantiâ infinitâ quàm in finitâ, ac proinde priorem quodammodo in me esse perceptionem infiniti quàm finiti, hoc est Dei quàm meî ipsius. Quâ enim ratione intelligerem me dubitare, me [46] cupere, hoc est, aliquid mihi deesse, & me non esse omnino perfectum, si nulla idea entis perfectioris in me esset, ex cujus comparatione defectus meos agnoscerem?

Nor should I think that I perceive the infinite not through a true idea but only by negating the finite, as I perceive rest and darkness by negating motion and light. On the contrary, I clearly understand that there is more reality in an infinite substance than in a finite one, and hence that my perception of the infinite is in some way prior in me to my perception of the finite—that is, my perception of God to that of myself. For how could I understand that I doubt, that I [46] desire—that is, that something is lacking in me, and that I am not wholly perfect—if there were in me no idea of a more perfect being, by comparison with which I recognized my defects?

AT 46 Nec dici potest hanc forte ideam Dei materialiter falsam esse, ideoque a nihilo esse posse, ut paulo ante de ideis caloris & frigoris, & similium, animadverti; nam contrà, cùm maxime clara & distincta sit, & plus realitatis objectivae quàm ulla alia contineat, nulla est per se magis vera, nec in quâ minor falsitatis suspicio reperiatur. Est, inquam, haec idea entis summe perfecti & infiniti maxime vera; nam quamvis forte fingi possit tale ens non existere, non tamen fingi potest ejus ideam nihil reale mihi exhibere, ut de ideâ frigoris ante dixi. Est etiam maxime clara & distincta; nam quidquid clare & distincte percipio, quod est reale & verum, & quod perfectionem aliquam importat, totum in eâ continetur.

Nor can it be said that this idea of God is perhaps materially false, and so could come from nothing, as I noted a little earlier about the ideas of heat and cold and the like. On the contrary, since it is supremely clear and distinct, and contains more objective reality than any other, no idea is truer in itself, and none is less open to the suspicion of falsity. This idea of a supremely perfect and infinite being is, I say, supremely true. For although one might perhaps pretend that such a being does not exist, one cannot pretend that its idea presents nothing real to me, as I said earlier about the idea of cold. It is also supremely clear and distinct; for whatever I perceive clearly and distinctly that is real and true, and that implies some perfection, is wholly contained in it.

Nec obstat quod non comprehendam infinitum, vel quod alia innumera in Deo sint, quae nec comprehendere, nec forte etiam attingere cogitatione, ullo modo possum; est enim de ratione infiniti, ut a me, qui sum finitus, non comprehendatur; & sufficit me hoc ipsum intelligere, ac judicare, illa omnia quae clare percipio, & perfectionem aliquam importare scio, atque etiam forte alia innumera quae ignoro, vel formaliter vel eminenter in Deo esse, ut idea quam de illo habeo sit omnium quae in me sunt maxime vera, & maxime clara & distincta.

Nor is it an obstacle that I do not comprehend the infinite, or that there are countless other things in God that I can in no way comprehend, or perhaps even reach in thought. For it belongs to the nature of the infinite that it is not comprehended by me, who am finite. And it is enough that I understand this very point, and judge that all the things I clearly perceive and know to imply some perfection—and perhaps countless others of which I am ignorant—are in God either formally or eminently, so that the idea I have of him is the truest, and the most clear and distinct, of all the ideas in me.

Sed forte majus aliquid sum quàm ipse intelligam, omnesque illae perfectiones quas Deo tribuo, potentiâ quodammodo in me sunt, etiamsi nondum sese exe [47] rant, neque ad actum reducantur. Experior enim jam cognitionem meam paulatim augeri; nec video quid obstet quominus ita magis & magis augeatur in infinitum,

But perhaps I am something greater than I myself understand, and all the perfections I attribute to God are in some way in me potentially, even if they do not yet [47] show themselves and are not brought into actuality. For I already experience

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nec etiam cur, cognitione sic auctâ, non possim ejus ope reliquas omnes Dei perfectiones adipisci; nec denique cur potentia ad istas perfectiones, si jam in me est, non sufficiat ad illarum ideam producendam.	my knowledge gradually increasing; and I do not see what prevents it from increasing more and more to infinity, nor why, with my knowledge thus increased, I could not by its means acquire all the other perfections of God; nor, finally, why the potential for these perfections, if it is already in me, would not suffice to produce the idea of them.
AT 47 Imo nihil horum esse potest. Nam primo, ut verum sit cognitionem meam gradatim augeri, & multa in me esse potentiâ quae actu nondum sunt, nihil tamen horum ad ideam Dei pertinet, in quâ nempe nihil omnino est potentiale; namque hoc ipsum, gradatim augeri, certissimum est imperfectionis argumentum. Praeterea, etiamsi cognitio mea semper magis & magis augeatur, nihilominus intelligo nunquam illam idcirco fore actu infinitam, quia nunquam eo devenietur, ut majoris adhuc incrementi non sit capax; Deum autem ita judico esse actu infinitum, ut nihil ejus perfectioni addi possit. Ac denique percipio esse objectivum ideae non a solo esse potentiali, quod proprie loquendo nihil est, sed tantummodo ab actuali sive formali posse produci.	But none of this can be so. First, even if it is true that my knowledge increases by degrees, and that there are many things in me potentially that are not yet actual, none of this pertains to the idea of God, in which there is nothing at all that is merely potential; indeed, this very fact—increasing by degrees—is the surest sign of imperfection. Moreover, even if my knowledge always increases more and more, I nevertheless understand that it will never on that account be actually infinite, because it will never reach a point where it is incapable of further increase. But I judge God to be actually infinite in such a way that nothing can be added to his perfection. And finally, I perceive that the objective being of an idea cannot be produced by merely potential being, which, properly speaking, is nothing, but only by actual or formal being.
Neque profecto quicquam est in his omnibus, quod diligenter attendenti non sit lumine naturali manifestum; sed quia, cùm minus attendo, & rerum sensibilium imagines mentis aciem excaecant, non ita facile recordor cur idea entis me perfectioris necessariò ab ente aliquo procedat quod sit revera perfectius, ulte [48] rius quaerere libet an ego ipse habens illam ideam esse possem, si tale ens nullum existeret.	Certainly there is nothing in all this that is not manifest by the natural light to anyone who attends carefully. But when I attend less, and the images of sensible things blind the mind's eye, I do not so easily remember why the idea of a being more perfect than I must necessarily come from some being that really is more perfect. So I would like to inquire [48] further whether I myself, who have this idea, could exist if no such being existed.
AT 48 Nempe a quo essem? A me scilicet, vel a parentibus, vel ab aliis quibuslibet Deo minus perfectis; nihil enim ipso perfectius, nec etiam aeque perfectum, cogitari aut fingi potest.	From what, then, would I derive my existence? From myself, of course, or from my parents, or from any other things less perfect than God; for nothing more perfect than God, or even as perfect, can be thought or imagined.
Atqui, si a me essem, nec dubitarem, nec optarem, nec omnino quicquam mihi deesset; omnes enim perfectiones quarum idea aliqua in me est, mihi dedissem, atque ita ipsemet Deus essem. Nec putare debeo illa forsan quae mihi desunt difficilius acquiri posse, quàm illa quae jam in me sunt; nam contrà, manifestum est longe difficilius fuisse me, hoc est rem sive substantiam cogitantem, ex nihilo emergere, quàm multarum rerum quas ignoro	Yet if I derived my existence from myself, I would not doubt, or wish for anything, or lack anything at all; for I would have given myself all the perfections of which there is any idea in me, and so I would myself be God. Nor should I think that the things I lack might perhaps be harder to acquire than those already in me. On the contrary, it is plain that it would have been far harder for me—that is, a thinking thing or substance—to emerge

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cognitiones, quae tantùm istius substantiae accidentia sunt, acquirere.

Ac certe, si majus illud a me haberem, non mihi illa saltem, quae facilius haberi possunt, denegassem, sed neque etiam ulla alia ex iis, quae in ideâ Dei contineri percipio; quia nempe nulla difficiliora factu mihi videntur; si quae autem difficiliora factu essent, certe etiam mihi difficiliora viderentur, siquidem reliqua quae habeo, a me haberem, quoniam in illis potentiam meam terminari experirer.

Neque vim harum rationum effugio, si supponam me forte semper fuisse ut nunc sum, tanquam si inde sequeretur, nullum existentiae meae authorem esse quaerendum. Quoniam enim omne tempus vitae in [49] partes innumeras dividi potest, quarum singulae a reliquis nullo modo dependent, ex eo quòd paulo ante fuerim, non sequitur me nunc debere esse, nisi aliqua causa me quasi rursus creet ad hoc momentum, hoc est me conservet. Perspicuum enim est attendenti ad temporis naturam, eâdem plane vi & actione opus esse ad rem quamlibet singulis momentis quibus durat conservandam, quâ opus esset ad eandem de novo creandam, si nondum existeret; adeo ut conservationem solâ ratione a creatione differre, sit etiam unum ex iis quae lumine naturali manifesta sunt.

AT 49 Itaque debeo nunc interrogare me ipsum, an habeam aliquam vim per quam possim efficere ut ego ille, qui jam sum, paulo post etiam sim futurus: nam, cùm nihil aliud sim quàm res cogitans, vel saltem cùm de eâ tantùm meî parte praecise nunc agam quae est res cogitans, si quae talis vis in me esset, ejus proculdubio conscius essem. Sed & nullam esse experior, & ex hoc ipso evidentissime cognosco me ab aliquo ente a me diverso pendere.

Forte verò illud ens non est Deus, sumque vel a parentibus productus, vel a quibuslibet aliis causis Deo minus perfectis. Imo, ut jam ante dixi, perspicuum est tantumdem ad minimum esse debere in causâ quantum est in effectu; & idcirco, cùm sim res cogitans, ideamque quandam Dei in me habens, qualiscunque tandem meî causa assignetur, illam etiam esse rem cogitantem, & omnium perfectionum, quas Deo tribuo, ideam habere

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out of nothing than to acquire knowledge of the many things I do not know, since such knowledge is only an accident of that substance.

And certainly, if I had that greater thing from myself, I would not have denied myself at least the things that can be had more easily—nor, indeed, any of the others that I perceive to be contained in the idea of God, since none of them seems to me harder to achieve. And if any were harder to achieve, they would certainly also seem harder to me, if I had the rest of what I have from myself, since I would experience my power reaching its limit in them.

Nor do I escape the force of these arguments if I suppose that perhaps I have always existed as I do now, as if it followed from this that no author of my existence need be sought. For since the whole span of a life can be divided into [49] countless parts, each of which in no way depends on the others, it does not follow from the fact that I existed a little while ago that I must exist now, unless some cause as it were creates me again at this moment—that is, preserves me. For it is clear to anyone who attends to the nature of time that exactly the same power and action are needed to preserve any thing at each moment of its duration as would be needed to create it anew if it did not yet exist. So that preservation differs from creation only in the way we think of it is also one of the things that are manifest by the natural light.

So I must now ask myself whether I have some power by which I can bring it about that I, who exist now, will also exist a little while from now. For since I am nothing but a thinking thing—or at least, since I am now dealing precisely with only that part of me which is a thinking thing—if there were any such power in me, I would undoubtedly be aware of it. But I experience that there is none, and from this very fact I know most evidently that I depend on some being distinct from me.

But perhaps that being is not God, and I was produced either by my parents or by some other causes less perfect than God. No: as I have already said, it is clear that there must be at least as much in the cause as there is in the effect. And therefore, since I am a thinking thing and have in me some idea of God, whatever cause of me is finally as-

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	fatendum est. Potestque de illâ rursus quaeri, an sit a se, vel ab aliâ. Nam si a se, patet ex dictis illam ipsam Deum esse, quia nempe, [50] cùm vim habeat per se existendi, habet proculdubio etiam vim possidendi actu omnes perfectiones quarum ideam in se habet, hoc est omnes quas in Deo esse concipio.	signed, it must be admitted that it too is a thinking thing and has the idea of all the perfections I attribute to God. And about that cause it can be asked in turn whether it derives its existence from itself or from another. If from itself, it is clear from what has been said that it is itself God; for [50] since it has the power of existing through itself, it undoubtedly also has the power of actually possessing all the perfections of which it has an idea in itself, that is, all those I conceive to be in God.
AT 50	Si autem sit ab aliâ, rursus eodem modo de hac alterâ quaeretur, an sit a se, vel ab aliâ, donec tandem ad causam ultimam deveniatur, quae erit Deus.	If, however, it derives its existence from another, then the same question will be asked in turn about this other, whether it is from itself or from another, until we finally arrive at the ultimate cause, which will be God.
	Satis enim apertum est nullum hîc dari posse progressum in infinitum, praesertim cùm non tantùm de causâ, quae me olim produxit, hîc agam, sed maxime etiam de illâ quae me tempore praesenti conservat.	For it is clear enough that there can be no infinite regress here, especially since I am dealing here not only with the cause that once produced me, but most of all with the cause that preserves me at the present time.
	Nec fingi potest plures forte causas partiales ad me efficiendum concurrisse, & ab unâ ideam unius ex perfectionibus quas Deo tribuo, ab aliâ ideam alterius me accepisse, adeo ut omnes quidem illae perfectiones alicubi in universo reperiantur, sed non omnes simul junctae in uno aliquo, qui sit Deus. Nam contrà, unitas, simplicitas, sive inseparabilitas eorum omnium quae in Deo sunt, una est ex praecipuis perfectionibus quas in eo esse intelligo. Nec certe istius omnium ejus perfectionum unitatis idea in me potuit poni ab ullâ causâ, a quâ etiam aliarum perfectionum ideas non habuerim: neque enim efficere potuit ut illas simul junctas & inseparabiles intelligerem, nisi simul effecerit ut quaenam illae essent agnoscerem.	Nor can it be supposed that several partial causes perhaps worked together to make me, and that I received the idea of one of the perfections I attribute to God from one cause, and the idea of another from another, so that all those perfections are indeed found somewhere in the universe, but not all joined together in some single being who would be God. On the contrary, the unity, simplicity, or inseparability of all the things that are in God is one of the chief perfections I understand to be in him. And certainly the idea of this unity of all his perfections could not have been placed in me by any cause from which I did not also get the ideas of the other perfections; for that cause could not have made me understand them as joined together and inseparable unless it had at the same time made me recognize what they were.
	Quantum denique ad parentes attinet, ut omnia vera sint quae de illis unquam putavi, non tamen profecto illi me conservant, nec etiam ullo modo me, quatenus sum res cogitans, effecerunt; sed tantùm dispositiones quasdam in eâ materiâ posuerunt, cui me, hoc est mentem, quam solam nunc pro me acci [51] pio, inesse judicavi. Ac proinde hîc nulla de iis difficultas esse potest; sed omnino est concludendum, ex hoc solo quòd existam, quaedamque idea entis perfectissimi, hoc est Dei, in me sit, evidentissime demonstrari Deum etiam existere...	Finally, as for my parents, even if everything I have ever believed about them is true, it is certainly not they who preserve me, nor did they in any way make me insofar as I am a thinking thing. They only placed certain dispositions in the matter in which I have judged that I—that is, the mind, which alone I now [51] take to be myself—reside. So there can be no difficulty about them here. Rather, it must simply be concluded that from the mere fact that I exist, and that there is in me an idea of a

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	most perfect being, that is, of God, it is most evidently demonstrated that God also exists.
AT 51 Superest tantùm ut examinem quâ ratione ideam istam a Deo accepi; neque enim illam sensibus hausi, nec unquam non expectanti mihi advenit, ut solent rerum sensibilium ideae, cùm istae res externis sensuum organis occurrunt, vel occurrere videntur; nec etiam a me efficta est, nam nihil ab illâ detrahere, nihil illi superaddere plane possum; ac proinde superest ut mihi sit innata, quemadmodum etiam mihi est innata idea meî ipsius.	It remains only for me to examine how I received this idea from God. For I did not draw it from the senses, nor has it ever come to me unexpectedly, as the ideas of sensible things usually do when those things strike, or seem to strike, the external organs of the senses. Nor was it made up by me, for I plainly cannot take anything away from it or add anything to it. And so it remains that it is innate in me, just as the idea of myself is also innate in me.

THE TRADEMARK ARGUMENT

Descartes argues God placed the idea of himself in him like a craftsman's mark and ends in contemplation.

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Et sane non mirum est Deum, me creando, ideam illam mihi indidisse, ut esset tanquam nota artificis operi suo impressa; nec etiam opus est ut nota illa sit aliqua res ab opere ipso diversa. Sed ex hoc uno quòd Deus me creavit, valde credibile est me quodammodo ad imaginem & similitudinem ejus factum esse, illamque similitudinem, in quâ Dei idea continetur, a me percipi per eandem facultatem, per quam ego ipse a me percipior: hoc est, dum in meipsum mentis aciem converto, non modo intelligo me esse rem incompletam & ab alio dependentem, remque ad majora & majora sive meliora indefinite aspirantem; sed simul etiam intelligo illum, a quo pendeo, majora ista omnia non indefinite & potentiâ tantùm, sed reipsâ infinite in se habere, atque ita Deum esse.	And it is certainly not surprising that God, in creating me, put this idea in me to be like the mark of a craftsman stamped on his work. Nor is it necessary that this mark be some thing distinct from the work itself. But from this one fact, that God created me, it is highly credible that I have been made in some way in his image and likeness, and that this likeness, in which the idea of God is contained, is perceived by me through the same faculty by which I myself am perceived by me. That is, when I turn the mind's eye upon myself, I not only understand that I am an incomplete thing, dependent on another, and a thing that aspires indefinitely to greater and greater, or better, things; I also understand at the same time that he on whom I depend has all those greater things in himself, not indefinitely and only potentially, but in reality and infinitely, and so that he is God.
Totaque vis argumenti in eo est, quòd agnoscam fieri non posse [52] ut existam talis naturae qualis sum, nempe ideam Dei in me habens, nisi revera Deus etiam existeret, Deus, inquam, ille idem cujus idea in me est, hoc est, habens omnes illas perfectiones, quas ego non comprehendere, sed quocunque modo attingere cogitatione possum, & nullis plane defectibus obnoxius. Ex quibus satis patet illum fallacem esse non posse; omnem enim fraudem & deceptionem a defectu aliquo pendere, lumine naturali manifestum est.	The whole force of the argument lies in this: I recognize that it is impossible [52] for me to exist with the nature I have—namely, having the idea of God in me—unless God really existed as well: God, I say, the very same God whose idea is in me, that is, one who has all those perfections which I cannot comprehend but can in some way reach in thought, and who is subject to no defects whatever. From this it is quite clear that he cannot be a deceiver; for it is manifest by the natural light that all fraud and deception depend on some defect.
AT 52	

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Sed priusquam hoc diligentius examinem, simulque in alias veritates quae inde colligi possunt inquiram, placet hîc aliquandiu in ipsius Dei contemplatione immorari, ejus attributa apud me expendere, & immensi hujus luminis pulchritudinem, quantum caligantis ingenii mei acies ferre poterit, intueri, admirari, adorare. Ut enim in hac solâ divinae majestatis contemplatione summam alterius vitae foelicitatem consistere fide credimus, ita etiam jam ex eâdem, licet multo minus perfectâ, maximam, cujus in hac vitâ capaces simus, voluptatem percipi posse experimur.

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But before I examine this more carefully, and at the same time inquire into other truths that can be gathered from it, I would like to pause here for a while in the contemplation of God himself, to weigh his attributes within myself, and to gaze upon, wonder at, and adore the beauty of this immense light, so far as the eye of my clouded ingenuity can bear it. For just as we believe by faith that the supreme happiness of the next life consists in this contemplation of the divine majesty alone, so we now experience that from this same contemplation, though far less perfect, we can derive the greatest pleasure of which we are capable in this life.

Fourth Meditation

Truth and falsity
Descartes explains how error is possible if God is no deceiver and how to avoid it.

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Ita me his diebus assuefeci in mente a sensibus abducendâ, tamque accurate animadverti perpauca [53] esse quae de rebus corporeis vere percipiantur, multoque plura de mente humanâ, multo adhuc plura de Deo cognosci, ut jam absque ullâ difficultate cogitationem a rebus imaginabilibus ad intelligibiles tantùm, atque ab omni materiâ secretas, convertam. Et sane multo magis distinctam habeo ideam mentis humanae, quatenus est res cogitans, non extensa in longum, latum, & profundum, nec aliud quid a corpore habens, quàm ideam ullius rei corporeae.

AT 53 Cùmque attendo me dubitare, sive esse rem incompletam & dependentem, adeo clara & distincta idea entis independentis & completi, hoc est Dei, mihi occurrit; & ex hoc uno quòd talis idea in me sit, sive quòd ego ideam illam habens existam, adeo manifeste concludo Deum etiam existere, atque ab illo singulis momentis totam existentiam meam dependere, ut nihil evidentius, nihil certius ab humano ingenio cognosci posse confidam. Jamque videre videor aliquam viam per quam ab istâ contemplatione veri Dei, in quo nempe sunt omnes thesauri scientiarum & sapientiae absconditi, ad caeterarum rerum cognitionem deveniatur.

In primis enim agnosco fieri non posse ut ille me unquam fallat; in omni enim fallaciâ vel deceptione aliquid imperfectionis reperitur; & quamvis posse fallere, nonnullum esse videatur acuminis aut potentiae argumentum, proculdubio velle fallere, vel malitiam vel imbecillitatem testatur, nec proinde in Deum cadit.

Deinde experior quandam in me esse judicandi facultatem, quam certe, ut & reliqua omnia quae in me [54]

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In these past days I have so accustomed myself to withdrawing my mind from the senses, and I have so carefully observed that there are very few [53] things that are truly perceived about corporeal things, while much more is known about the human mind, and still much more about God, that I now turn my thought without any difficulty away from imaginable things to things that are purely intelligible and separated from all matter. And indeed I have a much more distinct idea of the human mind, insofar as it is a thinking thing, not extended in length, breadth, and depth, and having nothing else of body about it, than I have of any corporeal thing.

And when I attend to the fact that I doubt, that is, that I am an incomplete and dependent thing, so clear and distinct an idea of an independent and complete being, that is, of God, comes to me; and from the one fact that such an idea is in me, or that I, who have this idea, exist, I conclude so plainly that God also exists, and that my whole existence depends on him at every single moment, that I am confident nothing can be known more evidently or more certainly by human ingenuity. And now I seem to see a way by which, from this contemplation of the true God, in whom all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom are hidden, we may arrive at the knowledge of other things.[1]

To begin with, I recognize that it is impossible for him ever to deceive me. For in all trickery or deception some imperfection is found; and although being able to deceive may seem to be some sign of cleverness or power, wanting to deceive undoubtedly bears witness either to malice or to weakness, and so cannot apply to God.

Next, I experience that there is in me a certain faculty of judging, which, like everything else that is

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	sunt, a Deo accepi; cùmque ille nolit me fallere, talem profecto non dedit, ut, dum eâ recte utor, possim unquam errare.	in me, [54] I certainly received from God. And since he does not wish to deceive me, he surely did not give me a faculty such that I could ever err while using it correctly.
AT 54	Nec ullum de hac re dubium superesset, nisi inde sequi videretur, me igitur errare nunquam posse; nam si quodcunque in me est, a Deo habeo, nec ullam ille mihi dederit errandi facultatem, non videor posse unquam errare.	No doubt would remain on this matter, except that it seems to follow that I can therefore never err. For if whatever is in me I have from God, and he has not given me any faculty of erring, it seems I can never err.

BETWEEN GOD AND NOTHINGNESS

Descartes places himself between God and nothingness and asks why God allows him to err.

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	Atque ita prorsus, quamdiu de Deo tantùm cogito, totusque in eum me converto, nullam erroris aut falsitatis causam deprehendo; sed, postmodum ad me reversus, experior me tamen innumeris erroribus esse obnoxium, quorum causam inquirens animadverto non tantùm Dei, sive entis summè perfecti, realem & positivam, sed etiam, ut ita loquar, nihili, sive ejus quod ab omni perfectione summè abest, negativam quandam ideam mihi obversari, & me tanquam medium quid inter Deum & nihil, sive inter summum ens & non ens ita esse constitutum, ut, quatenus a summo ente sum creatus, nihil quidem in me sit, per quod fallar aut in errorem inducar, sed quatenus etiam quodammodo de nihilo, sive de non ente, participo, hoc est quatenus non sum ipse summum ens, desuntque mihi quam plurima, non adeo mirum esse quòd fallar.	And indeed, so long as I think only about God, and turn myself wholly toward him, I find no cause of error or falsity. But when I afterwards turn back to myself, I nevertheless experience that I am subject to countless errors. Looking for their cause, I notice that there is present to me not only a real and positive idea of God, or of a supremely perfect being, but also, so to speak, a certain negative idea of nothingness, or of what is supremely remote from all perfection; and that I am constituted as something intermediate between God and nothingness, or between supreme being and non-being. So insofar as I was created by the supreme being, there is nothing in me through which I might be deceived or led into error; but insofar as I also in some way participate in nothingness, or non-being—that is, insofar as I am not myself the supreme being and lack a great many things—it is not so surprising that I am deceived.
	Atque ita certe intelligo errorem, quatenus error est, non esse quid reale quod a Deo dependeat, sed tantummodo esse defectum; nec proinde ad errandum mihi opus esse aliquâ facultate in hunc finem a Deo tributâ, sed contingere ut errem, ex eo quòd facultas verum judicandi, quam ab illo habeo, non sit in me infinita.	And so I certainly understand that error, insofar as it is error, is not something real that depends on God, but is merely a defect. Hence, in order to err, I do not need some faculty given me by God for that purpose; rather, I happen to err because the faculty of judging truly, which I have from him, is not infinite in me.
	Verumtamen hoc nondum omnino satisfacit; non [55] enim error est pura negatio, sed privatio, sive carentia cujusdam cognitionis, quae in me quodammodo esse deberet; atque attendenti ad Dei naturam non videtur fieri posse, ut ille aliquam in me posuerit facultatem, quae non sit in suo genere perfecta, sive quae aliquâ sibi	Yet this is still not wholly satisfactory. For error is not [55] a pure negation, but a privation, or lack, of some knowledge that ought in some way to be in me. And when I attend to the nature of God, it does not seem possible that he should have placed in me some faculty that is not perfect of its kind,

1 "In whom all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom are hidden" echoes Colossians 2:3.

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	debitâ perfectione sit privata. Nam si, quo peritior est artifex, eo perfectiora opera ab illo proficiscantur, quid potest a summo illo rerum omnium conditore factum esse, quod non sit omnibus numeris absolutum? Nec dubium est quin potuerit Deus me talem creare, ut nunquam fallerer; nec etiam dubium est quin velit semper id quod est optimum: anne ergo melius est me falli quàm non falli?	or that lacks some perfection due to it. For if the more skilled the craftsman, the more perfect the works that come from him, what can have been made by that supreme maker of all things that is not complete in every respect? Nor is there any doubt that God could have created me such that I would never be deceived; nor is there any doubt that he always wills what is best. Is it better, then, that I be deceived than not?
AT 55	Dum haec perpendo attentiùs, occurrit primò non mihi esse mirandum, si quaedam a Deo fiant quorum rationes non intelligam; nec de ejus existentiâ ideo esse dubitandum, quòd forte quaedam alia esse experiar, quae quare vel quomodo ab illo facta sint non comprehendo. Cùm enim jam sciam naturam meam esse valde infirmam & limitatam, Dei autem naturam esse immensam, incomprehensibilem, infinitam, ex hoc satis etiam scio innumerabilia illum posse quorum causas ignorem; atque ob hanc unicam rationem totum illud causarum genus, quod a fine peti solet, in rebus Physicis nullum usum habere existimo; non enim absque temeritate me puto posse investigare fines Dei.	As I weigh these things more attentively, it occurs to me first that I should not be surprised if God does some things whose reasons I do not understand; nor should I doubt his existence on the grounds that I perhaps find other things of which I do not comprehend why or how he made them. For since I now know that my nature is very weak and limited, while the nature of God is immense, incomprehensible, and infinite, I also know well enough from this that he can do countless things whose causes I do not know. And for this reason alone I consider that the whole class of causes customarily sought from the end is of no use in physical matters; for I do not think I can investigate the ends of God without rashness.[2]
	Occurrit etiam non unam aliquam creaturam separatim, sed omnem rerum universitatem esse spectandam, quoties an opera Dei perfecta sint inquirimus; quod enim forte non immeritò, si solum esset, valde [56] imperfectum videretur, ut habens in mundo rationem partis est perfectissimum; & quamvis, ex quo de omnibus volui dubitare, nihil adhuc praeter me & Deum existere certò cognovi, non possum tamen, ex quo immensam Dei potentiam animadverti, negare quin multa alia ab illo facta sint, vel saltem fieri possint, adeo ut ego rationem partis in rerum universitate obtineam.	It also occurs to me that whenever we inquire whether the works of God are perfect, we should consider not some single creature in isolation but the whole universe of things. For what might perhaps rightly seem very [56] imperfect if it existed alone is most perfect when regarded as having the role of a part in the world. And although, since I resolved to doubt everything, I have so far known with certainty that nothing exists except myself and God, still, since I have become aware of God's immense power, I cannot deny that many other things have been made by him, or at least could be made, so that I would have the role of a part in the universe of things.

INTELLECT AND WILL

Descartes traces error to the will, which reaches further than the limited intellect.

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AT 56	Deinde, ad me propius accedens, & qualesnam sint errores mei (qui soli imperfectionem aliquam in me arguunt) investigans, adverto illos a duabus causis simul	Next, coming closer to myself and investigating what sort of thing my errors are (for they alone point to some imperfection in me), I notice that

2 Causes "sought from the end" are final causes: explanations of a thing by the purpose it serves.

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concurrentibus dependere, nempe a facultate cognoscendi quae in me est, & a facultate eligendi, sive ab arbitrii libertate, hoc est ab intellectu & simul a voluntate.

Nam per solum intellectum percipio tantùm ideas de quibus judicium ferre possum, nec ullus error proprie dictus in eo praecise sic spectato reperitur; quamvis enim innumerae fortasse res existant, quarum ideae nullae in me sunt, non tamen proprie illis privatus, sed negative tantùm destitutus, sum dicendus, quia nempe rationem nullam possum afferre, quâ probem Deum mihi majorem quàm dederit cognoscendi facultatem dare debuisse; atque quantumvis peritum artificem esse intelligam, non tamen ideo puto illum in singulis ex suis operibus omnes perfectiones ponere debuisse, quas in aliquibus ponere potest. Nec verò etiam queri possum, quòd non satis amplam & perfectam voluntatem, sive arbitrii libertatem, a Deo acceperim; nam sane nullis illam limitibus circumscribi experior.

Et quod valde notandum mihi videtur, nulla [57] alia in me sunt tam perfecta aut tanta, quin intelligam perfectiora sive majora adhuc esse posse. Nam si, exempli causâ, facultatem intelligendi considero, statim agnosco perexiguam illam & valde finitam in me esse, simulque alterius cujusdam multo majoris, imò maximae atque infinitae, ideam formo, illamque ex hoc ipso quòd ejus ideam formare possim, ad Dei naturam pertinere percipio. Eâdem ratione, si facultatem recordandi vel imaginandi, vel quaslibet alias examinem, nullam plane invenio, quam non in me tenuem & circumscriptam, in Deo immensam, esse intelligam. Sola est voluntas, sive arbitrii libertas, quam tantam in me experior, ut nullius majoris ideam apprehendam; adeo ut illa praecipue sit, ratione cujus imaginem quandam & similitudinem Dei me referre intelligo.

AT 57 Nam quamvis major absque comparatione in Deo quàm in me sit, tum ratione cognitionis & potentiae quae illi adjunctae sunt, redduntque ipsam magis firmam & efficacem, tum ratione objecti, quoniam ad plura se extendit, non tamen, in se formaliter & praecise spectata, major videtur; quia tantùm in eo consistit, quòd idem vel facere vel non facere (hoc est affirmare vel negare, prosequi vel fugere) possimus, vel potius in eo tantùm,

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they depend on two causes working together: namely, on the faculty of knowing that is in me, and on the faculty of choosing, or freedom of choice—that is, on the intellect and at the same time on the will.

For through the intellect alone I merely perceive ideas about which I can make a judgment, and in the intellect, considered precisely in this way, no error properly so called is found. For although countless things perhaps exist of which I have no ideas, I should not be said to be properly deprived of them, but only to lack them in a negative sense. This is because I can offer no reason to prove that God ought to have given me a greater faculty of knowing than he has given; and however skilled a craftsman I understand him to be, I do not therefore think he ought to have put into each of his works all the perfections he can put into some. Nor, again, can I complain that I have not received from God a will, or freedom of choice, that is sufficiently broad and perfect; for I certainly experience that it is not confined by any limits.

And what seems to me especially worth noting is that there is nothing [57] else in me so perfect or so great that I do not understand that it could be still more perfect or greater. For if, for example, I consider the faculty of understanding, I immediately recognize that it is very slight and very limited in me, and at the same time I form an idea of another, much greater faculty—indeed, the greatest and infinite—and from the very fact that I can form an idea of it, I perceive that it belongs to the nature of God. In the same way, if I examine the faculty of remembering or of imagining, or any others, I find none at all that I do not understand to be feeble and limited in me but immense in God. It is only the will, or freedom of choice, that I experience to be so great in me that I can grasp the idea of none greater; so much so that it is chiefly by reason of the will that I understand myself to bear a certain image and likeness of God.

For although the will is incomparably greater in God than in me—both by reason of the knowledge and power joined to it, which make it firmer and more effective, and by reason of its object, since it extends to more things—still, considered formally and precisely in itself, it does not seem to be greater. For it consists only in this: that we are able to do or not to do the same thing (that is, to affirm or

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quòd ad id quod nobis ab intellectu proponitur affirmandum vel negandum, sive prosequendum vel fugiendum, ita feramur, ut a nullâ vi externâ nos ad id determinari sentiamus.	deny, to pursue or avoid). Or rather it consists only in this: that we are so moved to affirm or deny, or to pursue or avoid, what the intellect puts before us that we feel ourselves determined to it by no external force.

FREEDOM AND INDIFFERENCE

Descartes argues that freedom grows with clear reasons and that error comes from misusing the will.

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Neque enim opus est me in utramque partem ferri posse, ut sim liber, sed contrà, quo magis in unam propendeo, sive quia rationem [58] veri & boni in eâ evidenter intelligo, sive quia Deus intima cogitationis meae ita disponit, tanto liberius illam eligo; nec sane divina gratia, nec naturalis cognitio unquam imminuunt libertatem, sed potius augent & corroborant. Indifferentia autem illa, quam experior, cùm nulla me ratio in unam partem magis quàm in alteram impellit, est infimus gradus libertatis, & nullam in eâ perfectionem, sed tantummodo in cognitione defectum, sive negationem quandam, testatur; nam si semper quid verum & bonum sit clare viderem, nunquam de eo quod esset judicandum vel eligendum deliberarem; atque ita, quamvis plane liber, nunquam tamen indifferens esse possem.	For in order to be free I need not be able to be moved in both directions. On the contrary, the more I lean toward one side—whether because I evidently understand the [58] character of the true and the good in it, or because God so disposes the inmost reaches of my thought—the more freely I choose it. Neither divine grace nor natural knowledge ever diminishes freedom; rather, they increase and strengthen it. But the indifference I experience when no reason pushes me toward one side more than the other is the lowest grade of freedom. It is evidence not of any perfection in it, but only of a defect in knowledge, or a kind of negation. For if I always saw clearly what was true and good, I would never deliberate about what to judge or choose; and so, though entirely free, I could never be indifferent.
AT 58 Ex his autem percipio nec vim volendi, quam a Deo habeo, per se spectatam, causam esse errorum meorum, est enim amplissima, atque in suo genere perfecta; neque etiam vim intelligendi, nam quidquid intelligo, cùm a Deo habeam ut intelligam, proculdubio recte intelligo, nec in eo fieri potest ut fallar. Unde ergo nascuntur mei errores? Nempe ex hoc uno quòd, cùm latius pateat voluntas quàm intellectus, illam non intra eosdem limites contineo, sed etiam ad illa quae non intelligo extendo; ad quae cùm sit indifferens, facile a vero & bono deflectit, atque ita & fallor & pecco.	From these considerations I perceive that the cause of my errors is not the power of willing, which I have from God, considered in itself, for it is very ample and perfect of its kind. Nor is it the power of understanding: for whatever I understand, since I have from God the ability to understand it, I doubtless understand rightly, and I cannot possibly be deceived in it. Where, then, do my errors come from? Surely from this alone: that since the will extends more widely than the intellect, I do not keep it within the same limits, but extend it even to things I do not understand. Since it is indifferent to these, it easily turns aside from the true and the good; and so I both am deceived and sin.
Exempli causâ, cùm examinarem hisce diebus an aliquid in mundo existeret, atque adverterem, ex hoc ipso quòd illud examinarem, evidenter sequi me existere, non potui quidem non judicare illud quod tam clare intelligebam verum esse; non quòd ab ali [59] quâ vi externâ fuerim ad id coactus, sed quia ex magnâ luce in intellectu magna	For example, when I was examining these past days whether anything in the world existed, and noticed that from the very fact that I was examining this it evidently followed that I existed, I could not help judging that what I understood so clearly was true. Not that I was compelled to this by any [59]

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consequuta est propensio in voluntate, atque ita tanto magis sponte & libere illud credidi, quanto minus fui ad istud ipsum indifferens.

AT 59 Nunc autem, non tantùm scio me, quatenus sum res quaedam cogitans, existere, sed praeterea etiam idea quaedam naturae corporeae mihi obversatur, contingitque ut dubitem an natura cogitans quae in me est, vel potius quae ego ipse sum, alia sit ab istâ naturâ corporeâ, vel an ambae idem sint; & suppono nullam adhuc intellectui meo rationem occurrere, quae mihi unum magis quàm aliud persuadeat. Certe ex hoc ipso sum indifferens ad utrumlibet affirmandum vel negandum, vel etiam ad nihil de eâ re judicandum.

Quinimo etiam haec indifferentia non ad ea tantùm se extendit de quibus intellectus nihil plane cognoscit, sed generaliter ad omnia quae ab illo non satis perspicue cognoscuntur eo ipso tempore, quo de iis a voluntate deliberatur: quantumvis enim probabiles conjecturae me trahant in unam partem, sola cognitio quòd sint tantùm conjecturae, non autem certae atque indubitabiles rationes, sufficit ad assensionem meam in contrarium impellendam. Quod satis his diebus sum expertus, cùm illa omnia quae priùs ut vera quam maxime credideram, propter hoc unum quòd de iis aliquo modo posse dubitari deprehendissem, plane falsa esse supposui.

Cùm autem quid verum sit non satis clare & distincte percipio, si quidem a judicio ferendo abstineam, clarum est me recte agere, & non falli. Sed si vel affirmem vel negem, tunc libertate arbitrii non recte utor; atque [60] si in eam partem quae falsa est me convertam, plane fallar; si verò alteram amplectar, casu quidem incidam in veritatem, sed non ideo culpâ carebo, quia lumine naturali manifestum est perceptionem intellectûs praecedere semper debere voluntatis determinationem. Atque in hoc liberi arbitrii non recto usu privatio illa inest quae formam erroris constituit: privatio, inquam, inest in ipsâ operatione, quatenus a me procedit, sed non in facultate quam a Deo accepi, nec etiam in operatione quatenus ab illo dependet.

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external force, but because a great light in the intellect was followed by a great inclination in the will; and so I believed it all the more spontaneously and freely the less indifferent I was to it.

Now, however, I not only know that I exist insofar as I am a thinking thing, but an idea of corporeal nature also presents itself to me; and it happens that I doubt whether the thinking nature that is in me—or rather, that I myself am—is different from this corporeal nature, or whether the two are the same. And I suppose that no reason has yet occurred to my intellect that persuades me of one rather than the other. Certainly, from this very fact I am indifferent to affirming or denying either, or even to making no judgment on the matter at all.

Indeed, this indifference extends not only to things of which the intellect knows nothing at all, but in general to everything that the intellect does not know plainly enough at the very time when the will is deliberating about it. For however probable the conjectures that draw me in one direction, the mere knowledge that they are only conjectures, and not certain and indubitable reasons, is enough to push my assent the opposite way. I have had ample experience of this in these past days, when I supposed to be wholly false all the things I had previously believed most firmly to be true, for this one reason: that I had found they could in some way be doubted.

But when I do not perceive clearly and distinctly enough what is true, it is clear that if I refrain from making a judgment I act rightly and am not deceived. But if I either affirm or deny, then I do not use my freedom of choice rightly. And [60] if I turn to the side that is false, I shall plainly be deceived; if I embrace the other, I shall indeed hit on the truth by chance, but I shall not on that account be free of blame, since it is manifest by the natural light that the perception of the intellect must always precede the determination of the will. And in this incorrect use of free choice lies the privation that constitutes the form of error: the privation, I say, lies in the operation itself insofar as it proceeds from me, but not in the faculty I received from God, nor even in the operation insofar as it depends on him.[3]

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AT 60	Neque enim habeo causam ullam conquerendi, quòd Deus mihi non majorem vim intelligendi, sive non majus lumen naturale dederit quàm dedit, quia est de ratione intellectûs finiti ut multa non intelligat, & de ratione intellectûs creati ut sit finitus; estque quòd agam gratias illi, qui mihi nunquam quicquam debuit, pro eo quod largitus est, non autem quòd putem me ab illo iis esse privatum, sive illum mihi ea abstulisse, quae non dedit.	For I have no cause to complain that God did not give me a greater power of understanding, or a greater natural light, than he did; for it belongs to the nature of a finite intellect not to understand many things, and to the nature of a created intellect to be finite. Rather, I have reason to thank him, who never owed me anything, for what he has bestowed—not to think that he has deprived me of the things he did not give, or taken them away from me.
	Non habeo etiam causam conquerendi, quòd voluntatem dederit latius patentem quàm intellectum; cùm enim voluntas in unâ tantùm re, & tanquam in indivisibili consistat, non videtur ferre ejus natura ut quicquam ab illâ demi possit; & sane quo amplior est, tanto majores debeo gratias ejus datori.	Nor have I cause to complain that he gave me a will that extends more widely than the intellect. For since the will consists in one thing only, as if in something indivisible, its nature does not seem to allow anything to be taken away from it. And surely the ampler it is, the greater the thanks I owe to its giver.
	Nec denique etiam queri debeo, quòd Deus mecum concurrat ad eliciendos illos actus voluntatis, sive illa judicia, in quibus fallor: illi enim actus sunt omnino veri & boni, quatenus a Deo dependent, & major in me quodammodo perfectio est, quòd illos possim elicere, quàm si non possem. Privatio autem, in quâ solâ ratio [61] formalis falsitatis & culpae consistit, nullo Dei concursu indiget, quia non est res, neque ad illum relata ut causam privatio, sed tantummodo negatio dici debet.	Nor, finally, should I complain that God concurs with me in eliciting those acts of will, or those judgments, in which I am deceived. For those acts are wholly true and good insofar as they depend on God; and there is in a way greater perfection in me in being able to elicit them than if I could not. But the privation, in which alone the formal [61] character of falsity and fault consists, needs no concurrence from God, because it is not a thing; and when it is referred to him as its cause, it should be called not a privation but only a negation.
AT 61	Nam sane nulla imperfectio in Deo est, quòd mihi libertatem dederit assentiendi vel non assentiendi quibusdam, quorum claram & distinctam perceptionem in intellectu meo non posuit; sed proculdubio in me imperfectio est, quòd istâ libertate non bene utar, & de iis, quae non recte intelligo, judicium feram. Video tamen fieri a Deo facile potuisse, ut, etiamsi manerem liber, & cognitionis finitae, nunquam tamen errarem: nempe si vel intellectui meo claram & distinctam perceptionem omnium de quibus unquam essem deliberaturus indidisset; vel tantùm si adeo firmiter memoriae impressisset, de nullâ unquam re esse judicandum quam clare & distincte non intelligerem, ut nunquam ejus possem oblivisci. Et facile intelligo me, quatenus rationem habeo totius cujusdam, perfectiorem futurum fuisse quàm nunc sum, si talis a Deo factus essem.	For there is surely no imperfection in God in his having given me the freedom to assent or not to assent to certain things of which he did not put a clear and distinct perception in my intellect. But there is doubtless an imperfection in me in my not using that freedom well, and in my passing judgment on things I do not rightly understand. I see, however, that God could easily have brought it about that, while remaining free and of finite knowledge, I should nevertheless never err: namely, if he had either endowed my intellect with a clear and distinct perception of everything I would ever deliberate about, or simply impressed on my memory, so firmly that I could never forget it, that I must never judge anything I do not clearly and distinctly understand. And I read-

3 "Form" is the scholastic term for what makes a thing what it is; the privation is what error essentially consists in.

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	ily understand that, considered as a kind of whole in my own right, I would have been more perfect than I am now had God made me so.
Sed non ideo possum negare quin major quodammodo perfectio sit in totâ rerum universitate, quòd quaedam ejus partes ab erroribus immunes non sint, aliae verò sint, quàm si omnes plane similes essent. Et nullum habeo jus conquerendi quòd eam me Deus in mundo personam sustinere voluerit, quae non est omnium praecipua & maxime perfecta.	But I cannot on that account deny that there is in a way greater perfection in the whole universe of things because some of its parts are not immune from errors while others are, than if all of them were exactly alike. And I have no right to complain that God has willed me to play a role in the world that is not the chief and most perfect of all.

AVOIDING ERROR

Descartes resolves to avoid error by withholding judgment whenever the truth is not clear.

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Ac praeterea, etiam ut non possim ab erroribus abstinere priori illo modo qui pendet ab evidenti eorum omnium perceptione de quibus est deliberandum, possum tamen illo altero qui pendet ab eo tantùm, [62] quòd recorder, quoties de rei veritate non liquet, a judicio ferendo esse abstinendum; nam, quamvis eam in me infirmitatem esse experiar, ut non possim semper uni & eidem cognitioni defixus inhaerere, possum tamen attentâ & saepius iteratâ meditatione efficere, ut ejusdem, quoties usus exiget, recorder, atque ita habitum quemdam non errandi acquiram.	Moreover, even if I cannot abstain from errors in the first way, which depends on an evident perception of everything I must deliberate about, I can still do so in the other way, which depends only [62] on my remembering to refrain from judging whenever the truth of a matter is not plain. For although I experience in myself the weakness of not being able always to keep my attention fixed on one and the same piece of knowledge, I can nonetheless, by attentive and often repeated meditation, bring it about that I recall it whenever need requires, and so acquire a kind of habit of not erring.
AT 62 Quâ in re cùm maxima & praecipua hominis perfectio consistat, non parum me hodiernâ meditatione lucratum esse existimo, quòd erroris & falsitatis causam investigarim. Et sane nulla alia esse potest ab eâ quam explicui; nam quoties voluntatem in judiciis ferendis ita contineo, ut ad ea tantùm se extendat quae illi clare & distincte ab intellectu exhibentur, fieri plane non potest ut errem, quia omnis clara & distincta perceptio proculdubio est aliquid, ac proinde a nihilo esse non potest, sed necessariò Deum authorem habet, Deum, inquam, illum summe perfectum, quem fallacem esse repugnat; ideoque proculdubio est vera.	Since the greatest and chief perfection of a human being consists in this, I think I have gained no small amount from today's meditation, in having investigated the cause of error and falsity. And surely there can be no cause other than the one I have explained. For whenever I restrain the will in making judgments so that it extends only to what the intellect presents to it clearly and distinctly, it is quite impossible for me to err. For every clear and distinct perception is undoubtedly something, and so cannot come from nothing, but necessarily has God as its author—God, I say, that supremely perfect being, whom it is contradictory to suppose a deceiver. Therefore it is undoubtedly true.
Nec hodie tantùm didici quid mihi sit cavendum ut nunquam fallar, sed simul etiam quid agendum ut assequar veritatem; assequar enim illam profecto, si tantùm ad omnia quae perfecte intelligo satis attendam, atque illa a reliquis, quae confusius & obscurius	Nor have I learned today only what to guard against so as never to be deceived, but also what to do to attain the truth. For I will surely attain it if only I attend sufficiently to everything I understand perfectly, and separate it from the rest,

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apprehendo, secernam. Cui rei diligenter imposterum operam dabo.	which I apprehend more confusedly and obscurely. And this I will diligently work at from now on.

Fifth Meditation

The essence of material things, and God's existence considered again
Descartes examines the essence of matter and offers a second proof that God exists.

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AT 63	Multa mihi supersunt de Dei attributis, multa de meî ipsius sive mentis meae naturâ investiganda; sed illa forte aliàs resumam, jamque nihil magis urgere videtur (postquam animadverti quid cavendum atque agendum sit ad assequendam veritatem), quàm ut ex dubiis, in quae superioribus diebus incidi, coner emergere, videamque an aliquid certi de rebus materialibus haberi possit.	Many things remain for me to investigate about God's attributes, and many about the nature of myself, that is, of my mind. But perhaps I will take these up again another time. Now (having noticed what to guard against and what to do to attain the truth) nothing seems more urgent than to try to emerge from the doubts into which I fell in the preceding days, and to see whether anything certain can be had concerning material things.
	Et quidem, priusquam inquiram an aliquae tales res extra me existant, considerare debeo illarum ideas, quatenus sunt in meâ cogitatione, & videre quaenam ex iis sint distinctae, quaenam confusae.	And indeed, before I inquire whether any such things exist outside me, I must consider the ideas of them, insofar as they are in my thought, and see which of them are distinct and which confused.

THE ESSENCE OF MATERIAL THINGS

Descartes finds that he distinctly imagines extension, shape, number and motion in material things.

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	Nempe distincte imaginor quantitatem, quam vulgo Philosophi appellant continuam, sive ejus quantitatis aut potius rei quantae extensionem in longum, latum & profundum; numero in eâ varias partes; quaslibet istis partibus magnitudines, figuras, situs, & motus locales, motibusque istis quaslibet durationes assigno.	Well, then: I distinctly imagine quantity—what philosophers commonly call continuous quantity—or rather the extension of this quantity, or better of the quantified thing, in length, breadth, and depth. I count various parts in it. To these parts I assign any sizes, shapes, positions, and local motions whatever, and to these motions any durations whatever.[1]
	Nec tantùm illa, sic in genere spectata, mihi plane nota & perspecta sunt, sed praeterea etiam particularia innumera de figuris, de numero, de motu, & similibus, attendendo percipio, quorum veritas adeo aperta [64] est & naturae meae consentanea, ut, dum illa primùm detego, non tam videar aliquid novi addiscere, quàm eorum quae jam ante sciebam reminisci, sive ad ea primùm advertere, quae dudum quidem in me erant, licet non prius in illa obtutum mentis convertissem.	Not only are these things, considered thus in general, plainly known and transparent to me; in addition, by attending, I perceive countless particulars about shapes, number, motion, and the like, whose truth is so evident [64] and so in accord with my nature that, when I first discover them, I seem not so much to be learning something new as to be recalling what I already knew before, or to be noticing for the first time things that had long been in

1 "Continuous quantity" is the scholastic term for magnitude, as opposed to discrete quantity, or number.

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	me, though I had not previously turned my mind's gaze to them.

TRUE AND IMMUTABLE NATURES

Descartes argues that ideas like a triangle have true and immutable natures not invented by him.

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AT 64 Quodque hîc maxime considerandum puto, invenio apud me innumeras ideas quarumdam rerum, quae, etiam si extra me fortasse nullibi existant, non tamen dici possunt nihil esse; & quamvis a me quodammodo ad arbitrium cogitentur, non tamen a me finguntur, sed suas habent veras & immutabiles naturas.	And what I think most needs to be considered here is this: I find in myself countless ideas of certain things which, even if they perhaps exist nowhere outside me, still cannot be said to be nothing. And although in a sense I think them at will, they are not invented by me, but have their own true and immutable natures.
Ut cùm, exempli causâ, triangulum imaginor, etsi fortasse talis figura nullibi gentium extra cogitationem meam existat, nec unquam extiterit, est tamen profecto determinata quaedam ejus natura, sive essentia, sive forma, immutabilis & aeterna, quae a me non efficta est, nec a mente meâ dependet; ut patet ex eo quòd demonstrari possint variae proprietates de isto triangulo, nempe quòd ejus tres anguli sint aequales duobus rectis, quòd maximo ejus angulo maximum latus subtendatur, & similes, quas velim nolim clare nunc agnosco, etiamsi de iis nullo modo antea cogitaverim, cùm triangulum imaginatus sum, nec proinde a me fuerint effictae.	When I imagine a triangle, for example, even if perhaps no such figure exists anywhere at all outside my thought, or ever has, there is still certainly a determinate nature of it, or essence, or form, which is immutable and eternal, not made up by me and not dependent on my mind. This is evident from the fact that various properties can be demonstrated of this triangle—namely, that its three angles are equal to two right angles, that its greatest side is subtended by its greatest angle, and the like. These I now clearly recognize, whether I will or not, even if I had not thought of them in any way before when I imagined the triangle; and hence they were not made up by me.
Neque ad rem attinet, si dicam mihi forte a rebus externis per organa sensuum istam trianguli ideam advenisse, quia nempe corpora triangularem figuram habentia interdum vidi; possum enim alias innumeras figuras excogitare, de quibus nulla suspicio esse potest quòd mihi unquam per sensus illapsae sint, & tamen [65] varias de iis, non minus quàm de triangulo, proprietates demonstrare. Quae sane omnes sunt verae, quandoquidem a me clare cognoscuntur, ideoque aliquid sunt, non merum nihil: patet enim illud omne quod verum est esse aliquid; & jam fuse demonstravi illa omnia quae clare cognosco esse vera.	Nor is it to the point if I say that this idea of a triangle perhaps came to me from external things through the sense organs, since I have sometimes seen bodies having a triangular shape. For I can think up countless other shapes of which there can be no suspicion that they ever reached me through the senses, and yet [65] I can demonstrate various properties of them, no less than of the triangle. And these are all certainly true, since I know them clearly; and therefore they are something, not merely nothing. For it is evident that whatever is true is something; and I have already amply demonstrated that everything I know clearly is true.
AT 65 Atque quamvis id non demonstrassem, ea certe est natura mentis meae ut nihilominus non possem iis non assentiri, saltem quamdiu ea clare percipio; meminique me semper, etiam ante hoc tempus, cùm sensuum objectis quam maxime inhaererem, ejusmodi veritates, quae nempe de figuris, aut numeris, aliisve ad	And even if I had not demonstrated this, the nature of my mind is surely such that I could not help assenting to these things, at least as long as I perceive them clearly. And I remember that always, even before this time, when I clung as closely as possible to the objects of the senses, I re-

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Arithmeticam vel Geometriam vel in genere ad puram atque abstractam Mathesim pertinentibus, evidenter agnoscebam, pro omnium certissimis habuisse.	garded truths of this kind—those I evidently recognized concerning shapes, or numbers, or other things belonging to arithmetic, or geometry, or in general to pure and abstract mathematics—as the most certain of all.

THE ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

Descartes argues that existence belongs to the essence of a supremely perfect being, so God exists.

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Jam verò si ex eo solo, quòd alicujus rei ideam possim ex cogitatione meâ depromere, sequitur ea omnia, quae ad illam rem pertinere clare & distincte percipio, revera ad illam pertinere, nunquid inde haberi etiam potest argumentum, quo Dei existentia probetur? Certe ejus ideam, nempe entis summe perfecti, non minus apud me invenio, quàm ideam cujusvis figurae aut numeri; nec minus clare & distincte intelligo ad ejus naturam pertinere ut semper existat, quàm id quòd de aliquâ figurâ aut numero demonstro ad ejus figurae aut numeri naturam etiam pertinere; ac proinde, quamvis non omnia, quae superioribus hisce diebus meditatus sum, vera essent, in eodem ad minimum certitudinis gradu esse deberet apud me Dei existen [66] tia, in quo fuerunt hactenus Mathematicae veritates.	But now, if from the mere fact that I can draw the idea of some thing from my thought it follows that everything I clearly and distinctly perceive to belong to that thing really does belong to it, can I not also derive from this an argument by which the existence of God is proved? Certainly I find the idea of him—that is, of a supremely perfect being—in me no less than the idea of any shape or number. And I understand no less clearly and distinctly that it belongs to his nature always to exist than I understand that what I demonstrate of some shape or number also belongs to the nature of that shape or number. Hence, even if not everything I have meditated on in these past days were true, the existence of God ought to stand for me at least at the same degree of certainty [66] at which mathematical truths have stood until now.
AT 66 Quanquam sane hoc primâ fronte non est omnino perspicuum, sed quandam sophismatis speciem refert. Cùm enim assuetus sim in omnibus aliis rebus existentiam ab essentiâ distinguere, facile mihi persuadeo illam etiam ab essentiâ Dei sejungi posse, atque ita Deum ut non existentem cogitari. Sed tamen diligentius attendenti fit manifestum, non magis posse existentiam ab essentiâ Dei separari, quàm ab essentiâ trianguli magnitudinem trium ejus angulorum aequalium duobus rectis, sive ab ideâ montis ideam vallis: adeo ut non magis repugnet cogitare Deum (hoc est ens summe perfectum) cui desit existentia (hoc est cui desit aliqua perfectio), quàm cogitare montem cui desit vallis.	Admittedly, this is not entirely transparent at first sight, but has a certain look of a sophism. For since I am accustomed in all other things to distinguish existence from essence, I easily persuade myself that existence can also be separated from the essence of God, and so that God can be thought of as not existing. But when I attend more carefully it becomes manifest that existence can no more be separated from the essence of God than the equality of its three angles to two right angles can be separated from the essence of a triangle, or the idea of a valley from the idea of a mountain. So it is no less contradictory to think of God (that is, a supremely perfect being) lacking existence (that is, lacking some perfection) than to think of a mountain lacking a valley.
Verumtamen, ne possim quidem cogitare Deum nisi existentem, ut neque montem sine valle, at certe, ut neque ex eo quòd cogitem montem cum valle, ideo sequitur aliquem montem in mundo esse, ita neque ex eo quòd cogitem Deum ut existentem, ideo sequi videtur	And yet, even granting that I cannot think of God except as existing, just as I cannot think of a mountain without a valley, still, just as it does not follow from my thinking of a mountain with a valley that there is any mountain in the world, so it

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Deum existere: nullam enim necessitatem cogitatio mea rebus imponit; & quemadmodum imaginari licet equum alatum, etsi nullus equus habeat alas, ita forte Deo existentiam possum affingere, quamvis nullus Deus existat.

Imo sophisma hîc latet; neque enim, ex eo quòd non possim cogitare montem nisi cum valle, sequitur alicubi montem & vallem existere, sed tantùm mon [67] tem & vallem, sive existant, sive non existant, a se mutuo sejungi non posse. Atqui ex eo quòd non possim cogitare Deum nisi existentem, sequitur existentiam a Deo esse inseparabilem, ac proinde illum reverà existere; non quòd mea cogitatio hoc efficiat, sive aliquam necessitatem ulli rei imponat, sed contrà quia ipsius rei, nempe existentiae Dei, necessitas me determinat ad hoc cogitandum: neque enim mihi liberum est Deum absque existentiâ (hoc est ens summe perfectum absque summâ perfectione) cogitare, ut liberum est equum vel cum alis vel sine alis imaginari.

AT 67 Neque etiam hîc dici debet, necesse quidem esse ut ponam Deum existentem, postquam posui illum habere omnes perfectiones, quandoquidem existentia una est ex illis, sed priorem positionem necessariam non fuisse; ut neque necesse est me putare figuras omnes quadrilateras circulo inscribi, sed posito quòd hoc putem, necesse erit me fateri rhombum circulo inscribi, quod aperte tamen est falsum.

Nam, quamvis non necesse sit ut incidam unquam in ullam de Deo cogitationem, quoties tamen de ente primo & summo libet cogitare, atque ejus ideam tanquam ex mentis meae thesauro depromere, necesse est ut illi omnes perfectiones attribuam, etsi nec omnes tunc enumerem, nec ad singulas attendam: quae necessitas plane sufficit ut postea, cùm animadverto existentiam esse perfectionem, recte concludam ens primum & summum existere: quemadmodum non est necesse me ullum triangulum unquam imaginari, sed quoties volo figuram rectilineam tres tantùm angulos habentem considerare, necesse est ut illi ea tribuam, ex qui [68] bus recte infertur ejus tres angulos non majores esse duobus rectis, etiamsi hoc ipsum tunc non advertam.

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does not seem to follow from my thinking of God as existing that God exists. For my thought imposes no necessity on things; and just as I may imagine a winged horse although no horse has wings, so perhaps I can attach existence to God although no God exists.

No—this is where the sophism lies. From the fact that I cannot think of a mountain except with a valley, it does not follow that a mountain and a valley exist anywhere, but only that a mountain [67] and a valley, whether they exist or not, cannot be separated from each other. But from the fact that I cannot think of God except as existing, it follows that existence is inseparable from God, and hence that he really exists. Not that my thought brings this about, or imposes any necessity on any thing; on the contrary, the necessity of the thing itself, namely of God's existence, determines me to think this. For I am not free to think of God without existence (that is, a supremely perfect being without supreme perfection), as I am free to imagine a horse with or without wings.

Nor should it be said here that it is indeed necessary for me to posit that God exists once I have posited that he has all perfections, since existence is one of them, but that the first positing was not necessary—just as it is not necessary for me to think that all four-sided figures can be inscribed in a circle, but given that I do think this, I will have to admit that a rhombus can be inscribed in a circle, which is plainly false.

For although it is not necessary that I ever come upon any thought of God, still, whenever I choose to think of a first and supreme being, and to bring forth its idea as if from the treasury of my mind, it is necessary that I attribute all perfections to it, even if I do not then enumerate them all or attend to each one. And this necessity is quite sufficient for me afterward, when I notice that existence is a perfection, to conclude rightly that a first and supreme being exists. In the same way, it is not necessary that I ever imagine any triangle; but whenever I wish to consider a rectilinear figure having only three angles, it is necessary that I attribute to it the properties from which [68] it is rightly inferred that its three angles are not greater than two right angles, even if I do not notice this at the time.

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AT 68	Cùm verò examino quaenam figurae circulo inscribantur, nullo modo necesse est ut putem omnes quadrilateras ex eo numero esse; imò etiam idipsum nequidem fingere possum, quamdiu nihil volo admittere nisi quod clare & distincte intelligo. Ac proinde magna differentia est inter ejusmodi falsas positiones, & ideas veras mihi ingenitas, quarum prima & praecipua est idea Dei.	But when I examine which figures can be inscribed in a circle, it is in no way necessary that I think all four-sided figures are among them. In fact, I cannot even pretend this, so long as I am willing to admit nothing except what I clearly and distinctly understand. And so there is a great difference between false suppositions of this kind and the true ideas that are innate in me, the first and chief of which is the idea of God.
	Nam sane multis modis intelligo illam non esse quid fictitium a cogitatione meâ dependens, sed imaginem verae & immutabilis naturae: ut, primo, quia nulla alia res potest a me excogitari, ad cujus essentiam existentia pertineat, praeter solum Deum; deinde, quia non possum duos aut plures ejusmodi Deos intelligere, & quia, posito quòd jam unus existat, plane videam esse necessarium ut & ante ab aeterno extiterit, & in aeternum sit mansurus; ac denique, quòd multa alia in Deo percipiam, quorum nihil a me detrahi potest nec mutari.	For indeed I understand in many ways that this idea is not something fictitious, dependent on my thought, but the image of a true and immutable nature. First, because I can think up no other thing to whose essence existence belongs, except God alone. Next, because I cannot understand two or more such Gods; and because, supposing that one exists now, I plainly see that it is necessary both that he has existed before from eternity and that he will remain for eternity. And finally, because I perceive many other things in God, none of which can be taken away or changed by me.
	Sed verò, quâcumque tandem utar probandi ratione, semper eò res redit, ut ea me sola plane persuadeant, quae clare & distincte percipio. Et quidem ex iis quae ita percipio, etsi nonnulla unicuique obvia sint, alia verò nonnisi ab iis qui propiùs inspiciunt & diligenter investigant deteguntur, postquam tamen detecta sunt, haec non minus certa quàm illa existimantur. Ut quamvis non tam facile appareat in triangulo rectan [69] gulo quadratum basis aequale esse quadratis laterum, quàm istam basim maximo ejus angulo subtendi, non tamen minùs creditur, postquam semel est perspectum.	But whatever method of proof I use in the end, it always comes back to this: only what I perceive clearly and distinctly fully persuades me. And indeed, of the things I perceive in this way, although some are obvious to everyone while others are discovered only by those who look more closely and investigate diligently, nevertheless once the latter have been discovered they are judged no less certain than the former. Thus, although in a right [69] triangle it is not as readily apparent that the square on the base is equal to the squares on the sides as that the base is subtended by its greatest angle, the former is no less believed once it has been seen.
AT 69	Quod autem ad Deum attinet, certe nisi praejudiciis obruerer, & rerum sensibilium imagines cogitationem meam omni ex parte obsiderent, nihil illo prius aut facilius agnoscerem; nam quid ex se est apertius, quàm summum ens esse, sive Deum, ad cujus solius essentiam existentia pertinet, existere?	As for God, certainly, if I were not overwhelmed by preconceived opinions, and if the images of sensible things did not besiege my thought on every side, I would recognize nothing sooner or more easily than him. For what is more self-evident than that the supreme being exists—that is, God, to whose essence alone existence belongs?

WHY ALL KNOWLEDGE DEPENDS ON GOD

Descartes argues that the certainty of all knowledge, even mathematics, depends on knowing that God exists.

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Atque, quamvis mihi attentâ consideratione opus fuerit ad hoc ipsum percipiendum, nunc tamen non modo de eo aeque certus sum ac de omni alio quod certissimum videtur, sed praeterea etiam animadverto caeterarum rerum certitudinem ab hoc ipso ita pendere, ut absque eo nihil unquam perfecte sciri possit.	And although I needed attentive consideration to perceive this very thing, now I am not only as certain of it as of anything else that seems most certain, but I also notice that the certainty of all other things depends on it in such a way that without it nothing could ever be perfectly known.
Etsi enim ejus sim naturae ut, quamdiu aliquid valde clare & distincte percipio, non possim non credere verum esse, quia tamen ejus etiam sum naturae ut non possim obtutum mentis in eandem rem semper defigere ad illam clare percipiendam, recurratque saepe memoria judicii ante facti, cùm non amplius attendo ad rationes propter quas tale quid judicavi, rationes aliae afferri possunt quae me, si Deum ignorarem, facile ab opinione dejicerent, atque ita de nullâ unquam re veram & certam scientiam, sed vagas tantùm & mutabiles opiniones, haberem.	For although I am of such a nature that, as long as I perceive something very clearly and distinctly, I cannot help believing it to be true, I am also of such a nature that I cannot always fix my mind's gaze on the same thing so as to perceive it clearly; and the memory of a judgment previously made often comes back when I am no longer attending to the reasons for which I made it. So other reasons can be brought forward which, if I did not know God, would easily dislodge me from that opinion; and so I would never have true and certain knowledge of anything, but only shifting and changeable opinions.
Sic, exempli causâ, cùm naturam trianguli considero, evidentissime quidem mihi, utpote Geometriae principiis imbuto, apparet ejus tres angulos aequales esse duobus rectis, nec possum non credere id verum esse, quamdiu ad [70] ejus demonstrationem attendo; sed statim atque mentis aciem ab illâ deflexi, quantumvis adhuc recorder me illam clarissime perspexisse, facile tamen potest accidere ut dubitem an sit vera, si quidem Deum ignorem. Possum enim mihi persuadere me talem a naturâ factum esse, ut interdum in iis fallar quae me puto quàm evidentissime percipere, cùm praesertim meminerim me saepe multa pro veris & certis habuisse, quae postmodum, aliis rationibus adductus, falsa esse judicavi.	Thus, for example, when I consider the nature of a triangle, it appears most evident to me, steeped as I am in the principles of geometry, that its three angles are equal to two right angles; and I cannot help believing this to be true as long as I attend [70] to its demonstration. But as soon as I turn my mind's eye away from it, however well I still remember that I saw it most clearly, it can easily happen that I doubt whether it is true, if indeed I do not know God. For I can persuade myself that I was made by nature such that I am sometimes deceived in things I think I perceive most evidently—especially since I remember that I have often taken many things as true and certain that I later judged, led by other reasons, to be false.
AT 70 Postquam verò percepi Deum esse, quia simul etiam intellexi caetera omnia ab eo pendere, illumque non esse fallacem; atque inde collegi illa omnia, quae clare & distincte percipio, necessariò esse vera; etiamsi non attendam amplius ad rationes propter quas istud verum esse judicavi, modo tantùm recorder me clare & distincte perspexisse, nulla ratio contraria afferri potest, quae me ad dubitandum impellat, sed veram & certam de hoc habeo scientiam. Neque de hoc tantùm, sed & de reliquis omnibus quae memini me aliquando demonstrasse, ut de	But once I have perceived that God exists, since I have at the same time also understood that everything else depends on him and that he is not a deceiver, and have gathered from this that everything I perceive clearly and distinctly is necessarily true, then—even if I no longer attend to the reasons for which I judged it true, provided only that I remember having seen it clearly and distinctly—no contrary reason can be brought forward that would drive me to doubt it; instead, I

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	Geometricis & similibus. Quid enim nunc mihi opponetur? Mene talem factum esse ut saepe fallar? At jam scio me in iis, quae perspicue intelligo, falli non posse. Mene multa aliàs pro veris & certis habuisse, quae postea falsa esse deprehendi?	have true and certain knowledge of it. And not only of this, but also of everything else I remember having once demonstrated, such as the truths of geometry and the like. For what will now be raised against me? That I was made such that I am often deceived? But I now know that I cannot be deceived in things I understand transparently. That at other times I took many things as true and certain that I later found to be false?
	Atqui nulla ex iis clare & distincte perceperam, sed hujus regulae veritatis ignarus ob alias causas forte credideram, quas postea minus firmas esse detexi. Quid ergo dicetur? Anne (ut nuper mihi objiciebam) me forte somniare, sive illa omnia, quae jam cogito, non magis vera esse quàm ea quae dormienti occurrunt? Imò etiam hoc nihil mutat; nam certe, [71] quamvis somniarem, si quid intellectui meo sit evidens, illud omnino est verum.	But I had perceived none of those clearly and distinctly; rather, ignorant of this rule of truth, I had perhaps believed them for other reasons, which I later discovered to be less firm. What, then, will be said? That perhaps (as I recently objected to myself) I am dreaming, or that everything I am now thinking is no more true than what occurs to someone asleep? Even this changes nothing. For certainly, [71] even if I were dreaming, if something is evident to my intellect, it is wholly true.
AT 71	Atque ita plane video omnis scientiae certitudinem & veritatem ab unâ veri Dei cognitione pendere, adeo ut, priusquam illum nossem, nihil de ullâ aliâ re perfecte scire potuerim. Jam verò innumera, tum de ipso Deo aliisque rebus intellectualibus, tum etiam de omni illâ naturâ corporeâ, quae est purae Matheseos objectum, mihi plane nota & certa esse possunt.	And so I plainly see that the certainty and truth of all knowledge depends on the knowledge of the true God alone, so that before I knew him I could not have known anything else perfectly. But now countless things can be plainly known and certain to me, both about God himself and other intellectual things, and also about the whole of that corporeal nature which is the object of pure mathematics.

Sixth Meditation

The existence of material things, and the real distinction between mind and body
Descartes proves material things exist, argues mind and body are distinct, and explains their union.

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	Reliquum est ut examinem an res materiales existant. Et quidem jam ad minimum scio illas, quatenus sunt purae Matheseos objectum, posse existere, quandoquidem ipsas clare & distincte percipio. Non enim dubium est quin Deus sit capax ea omnia efficiendi quae ego sic percipiendi sum capax; nihilque unquam ab illo fieri non posse judicavi, nisi propter hoc quòd illud a me distincte percipi repugnaret. Praeterea ex imaginandi facultate, quâ me uti experior, dum circa res istas materiales versor, sequi videtur illas existere; nam attentius consideranti quidnam sit imaginatio, [72] nihil aliud esse apparet quàm quaedam applicatio facultatis cognoscitivae ad corpus ipsi intime praesens, ac proinde existens.	It remains for me to examine whether material things exist. And indeed I already know at least that they can exist, insofar as they are the object of pure mathematics, since I perceive them clearly and distinctly. For there is no doubt that God is capable of bringing about everything that I am capable of perceiving in this way; and I have never judged that something could not be done by him except on the ground that it would be contradictory for me to perceive it distinctly. Further, from the faculty of imagination, which I find I use when I am occupied with these material things, it seems to follow that they exist. For when I consider more attentively what imagination is, [72] it appears to be nothing other than a certain application of the cognitive faculty to a body that is intimately present to it, and hence existing.

IMAGINATION AND PURE UNDERSTANDING

Descartes distinguishes imagination from pure understanding and reviews what the senses taught him before.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
AT 72	Quo ut planum fiat, primò examino differentiam quae est inter imaginationem & puram intellectionem. Nempe, exempli causâ, cùm triangulum imaginor, non tantùm intelligo illud esse figuram tribus lineis comprehensam, sed simul etiam istas tres lineas tanquam praesentes acie mentis intueor, atque hoc est quod imaginari appello. Si verò de chiliogono velim cogitare, equidem aeque bene intelligo illud esse figuram constantem mille lateribus, ac intelligo triangulum esse figuram constantem tribus; sed non eodem modo illa mille latera imaginor, sive tanquam praesentia intueor.	To make this plain, I first examine the difference between imagination and pure understanding. For example, when I imagine a triangle, I not only understand that it is a figure bounded by three lines, but at the same time I also look upon these three lines as present with the eye of the mind; and this is what I call imagining. But if I want to think about a chiliagon, I certainly understand that it is a figure consisting of a thousand sides just as well as I understand that a triangle is a figure consisting of three; but I do not imagine those thousand sides in the same way, or look upon them as present.[1]
	Et quamvis tunc, propter consuetudinem aliquid semper imaginandi, quoties de re corporeâ cogito, figuram forte	And although at such a time, from the habit of always imagining something whenever I think

1 A chiliagon is a polygon with a thousand sides.

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aliquam confuse mihi repraesentem, patet tamen illam non esse chiliogonum, quia nullâ in re est diversa ab eâ quam mihi etiam repraesentarem, si de myriogono aliâve quâvis figurâ plurimorum laterum cogitarem; nec quicquam juvat ad eas proprietates, quibus chiliogonum ab aliis polygonis differt, agnoscendas.

Si verò de pentagono quaestio sit, possum quidem ejus figuram intelligere, sicut figuram chiliogoni, absque ope imaginationis; sed possum etiam eandem imaginari, applicando scilicet aciem mentis ad ejus quinque latera, simulque ad aream iis contentam; & manifeste hîc animadverto mihi pecu [73] liari quâdam animi contentione opus esse ad imaginandum, quâ non utor ad intelligendum: quae nova animi contentio differentiam inter imaginationem & intellectionem puram clare ostendit.

AT 73 Ad haec considero istam vim imaginandi quae in me est, prout differt a vi intelligendi, ad meî ipsius, hoc est ad mentis meae essentiam non requiri; nam quamvis illa a me abesset, proculdubio manerem nihilominus ille idem qui nunc sum; unde sequi videtur illam ab aliquâ re a me diversâ pendere.

Atque facilè intelligo, si corpus aliquod existat cui mens sit ita conjuncta ut ad illud veluti inspiciendum pro arbitrio se applicet, fieri posse ut per hoc ipsum res corporeas imaginer; adeo ut hic modus cogitandi in eo tantùm a purâ intellectione differat, quòd mens, dum intelligit, se ad seipsam quodammodo convertat, respiciatque aliquam ex ideis quae illi ipsi insunt; dum autem imaginatur, se convertat ad corpus, & aliquid in eo ideae vel a se intellectae vel sensu perceptae conforme intueatur.

Facilè, inquam, intelligo imaginationem ita perfici posse, siquidem corpus existat; & quia nullus alius modus aeque conveniens occurrit ad illam explicandam, probabiliter inde conjicio corpus existere; sed probabiliter tantùm, & quamvis accurate omnia investigem, nondum tamen video ex eâ naturae corporeae ideâ distinctâ, quam in imaginatione meâ invenio, ullum sumi posse argumentum, quod necessariò concludat aliquòd corpus existere. [74]

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about a corporeal thing, I may perhaps represent some figure to myself confusedly, it is clear that this is not a chiliagon, since it is in no way different from the figure I would also represent to myself if I were thinking of a myriagon, or any other figure with very many sides; nor does it help at all in recognizing the properties by which a chiliagon differs from other polygons.

But if the question is about a pentagon, I can indeed understand its figure, like the figure of the chiliagon, without the help of the imagination; but I can also imagine it, namely by applying the mind's eye to its five sides and at the same time to the area they enclose. And here I clearly notice that I need a peculiar [73] effort of mind in order to imagine, which I do not use in order to understand; and this new effort of mind clearly shows the difference between imagination and pure understanding.

In addition, I consider that this power of imagining that is in me, insofar as it differs from the power of understanding, is not required for my own essence, that is, for the essence of my mind. For even if it were absent from me, I would doubtless remain the same one I now am. From this it seems to follow that it depends on some thing different from me.

And I readily understand that, if some body exists to which the mind is so joined that it can apply itself at will to inspecting it, as it were, it may be that by this very means I imagine corporeal things. So this mode of thinking would differ from pure understanding only in this: that the mind, when it understands, in a way turns toward itself and looks at one of the ideas that are in it; but when it imagines, it turns toward the body and looks upon something in it that conforms to an idea either understood by the mind itself or perceived by the senses.

I readily understand, I say, that imagination could be brought about in this way, if indeed a body exists; and because no other equally suitable way of explaining it occurs to me, I conjecture from this that a body probably exists. But only probably; and however carefully I investigate everything, I still do not see that from the distinct idea of corporeal nature that I find in my imagination any ar-

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gument can be drawn that necessarily concludes that some body exists. [74]

AT 74 Soleo verò alia multa imaginari, praeter illam naturam corpoream, quae est purae Matheseos objectum, ut colores, sonos, sapores, dolorem, & similia, sed nulla tam distincte; & quia haec percipio meliùs sensu, a quo videntur ope memoriae ad imaginationem pervenisse, ut commodiùs de ipsis agam, eâdem operâ etiam de sensu est agendum, videndumque an ex iis quae isto cogitandi modo, quem sensum appello, percipiuntur, certum aliquod argumentum pro rerum corporearum existentiâ habere possim.

But I am accustomed to imagine many other things besides that corporeal nature which is the object of pure mathematics—such as colors, sounds, tastes, pain, and the like—but none so distinctly. And since I perceive these better by the senses, from which they seem to have reached the imagination with the help of memory, then in order to deal with them more conveniently I must by the same token deal with the senses as well, and see whether, from the things perceived by this mode of thinking that I call sensing, I can obtain some certain argument for the existence of corporeal things.

Et primo quidem apud me hîc repetam quaenam illa sint quae antehac, ut sensu percepta, vera esse putavi, & quas ob causas id putavi; deinde etiam causas expendam propter quas eadem postea in dubium revocavi; ac denique considerabo quid mihi nunc de iisdem sit credendum.

And first I will go back over in my mind what the things were that I previously thought were true, as perceived by the senses, and for what reasons I thought so. Next I will also weigh the reasons for which I later called these same things into doubt. And finally I will consider what I ought now to believe about them.

Primo itaque sensi me habere caput, manus, pedes, & membra caetera ex quibus constat illud corpus, quod tanquam meî partem, vel forte etiam tanquam me totum spectabam; sensique hoc corpus inter alia multa corpora versari, a quibus variis commodis vel incommodis affici potest, & commoda ista sensu quodam voluptatis, & incommoda sensu doloris metiebar. Atque, praeter dolorem & voluptatem, sentiebam etiam in me famem, sitim, aliosque ejusmodi appetitus; itemque corporeas quasdam propensiones ad hilaritatem, ad tristitiam, ad iram, similesque alios affectus; foris verò, praeter corporum extensionem, & figuras, & [75] motus, sentiebam etiam in illis duritiem, & calorem, aliasque tactiles qualitates; ac praeterea lumen, & colores, & odores, & sapores, & sonos, ex quorum varietate caelum, terram, maria, & reliqua corpora ab invicem distinguebam.

First, then, I sensed that I had a head, hands, feet, and the other limbs that make up that body which I regarded as a part of me, or perhaps even as the whole of me. And I sensed that this body was situated among many other bodies, by which it could be affected in various beneficial or harmful ways; and I measured the beneficial ones by a certain sensation of pleasure, and the harmful ones by a sensation of pain. Besides pain and pleasure, I also sensed in myself hunger, thirst, and other appetites of this kind; and likewise certain bodily inclinations toward cheerfulness, toward sadness, toward anger, and other similar emotions. And outside me, besides the extension of bodies, and their shapes and [75] motions, I also sensed in them hardness and heat and other tactile qualities; and in addition light, and colors, and smells, and tastes, and sounds, by whose variety I distinguished the sky, the earth, the seas, and the other bodies from one another.

AT 75 Nec sane absque ratione, ob ideas istarum omnium qualitatum quae cogitationi meae se offerebant, & quas solas proprie & immediate sentiebam, putabam me sentire res quasdam a meâ cogitatione plane diversas, nempe corpora a quibus ideae istae procederent; experiebar enim illas absque ullo meo consensu mihi

Nor, surely, was it without reason that, on account of the ideas of all these qualities that presented themselves to my thought—and these ideas were all that I properly and immediately sensed—I thought I was sensing certain things quite differ-

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advenire, adeo ut neque possem objectum ullum sentire, quamvis vellem, nisi illud sensûs organo esset praesens, nec possem non sentire cùm erat praesens. Cùmque ideae sensu perceptae essent multo magis vividae & expressae, & suo etiam modo magis distinctae, quàm ullae ex iis quas ipse prudens & sciens meditando effingebam, vel memoriae meae impressas advertebam, fieri non posse videbatur ut a meipso procederent; ideoque supererat ut ab aliis quibusdam rebus advenirent.

Quarum rerum cùm nullam aliunde notitiam haberem quàm ex istis ipsis ideis, non poterat aliud mihi venire in mentem quàm illas iis similes esse. Atque etiam quia recordabar me prius usum fuisse sensibus quàm ratione, videbamque ideas quas ipse effingebam non tam expressas esse, quàm illae erant quas sensu percipiebam, & plerumque ex earum partibus componi, facile mihi persuadebam nullam plane me habere in intellectu, quam non prius habuissem in sensu.

Non etiam sine ratione corpus illud, quod speciali quodam jure meum ap [76] pellabam, magis ad me pertinere quàm alia ulla arbitrabar: neque enim ab illo poteram unquam sejungi, ut a reliquis; omnes appetitus & affectus in illo & pro illo sentiebam; ac denique dolorem & titillationem voluptatis in ejus partibus, non autem in aliis extra illud positis, advertebam.

AT 76 Cur verò ex isto nescio quo doloris sensu quaedam animi tristitia, & ex sensu titillationis laetitia quaedam consequatur, curve illa nescio quae vellicatio ventriculi, quam famem voco, me de cibo sumendo admoneat, gutturis verò ariditas de potu, & ita de caeteris, non aliam sane habebam rationem, nisi quia ita doctus sum a naturâ; neque enim ulla plane est affinitas (saltem quam ego intelligam) inter istam vellicationem & cibi sumendi voluntatem, sive inter sensum rei dolorem inferentis, & cogitationem tristitiae ab isto sensu exortae. Sed & reliqua omnia, quae de sensuum objectis judicabam, videbar a naturâ didicisse: priùs enim illa ita se habere mihi persuaseram, quàm rationes ullas quibus hoc ipsum probaretur expendissem.

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ent from my thought, namely bodies from which these ideas came. For I found that they came to me without any consent of mine, so that I could not sense any object, however much I wanted to, unless it was present to a sense organ, nor could I fail to sense it when it was present. And since the ideas perceived by the senses were much more vivid and sharp, and even in their own way more distinct, than any of those that I myself formed deliberately and knowingly in meditating, or that I noticed impressed on my memory, it seemed impossible that they should come from me myself. So the only remaining possibility was that they came to me from some other things.

Since I had no knowledge of these things from any source other than these very ideas, nothing could occur to me except that the things resembled the ideas. And because I also remembered that I had used my senses before I used my reason, and saw that the ideas I formed myself were not as sharp as those I perceived by the senses, and were for the most part composed of parts of them, I easily convinced myself that I had nothing at all in my intellect that I had not previously had in the senses.

It was not without reason, either, that I judged that the body which by some special right I [76] called my own belonged to me more than any other did. For I could never be separated from it, as I could from the others; I felt all my appetites and emotions in it and on its behalf; and finally, I noticed pain and the tickle of pleasure in its parts, but not in other bodies located outside it.

But why some sadness of mind should follow from this sensation of pain, whatever it is, and some joy from the sensation of tickling; or why that odd twitching of the stomach that I call hunger should prompt me to take food, and dryness of the throat to take drink, and so on—for this I really had no explanation except that nature had taught me so. For there is plainly no affinity at all (at least none that I understand) between that twitching and the will to take food, or between the sensation of the thing that causes pain and the thought of sadness that arises from that sensation. And all the other judgments I made about the objects of the senses I seemed to have learned from nature as well; for I had persuaded myself that things were so before I had weighed any arguments that might prove it.

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Postea verò multa paulatim experimenta fidem omnem quam sensibus habueram labefactarunt; nam & interdum turres, quae rotundae visae fuerant è longinquo, quadratae apparebant è propinquo, & statuae permagnae, in eorum fastigiis stantes, non magnae è terrâ spectanti videbantur; & talibus aliis innumeris in rebus sensuum externorum judicia falli deprehendebam. Nec externorum duntaxat, sed etiam interno [77] rum; nam quid dolore intimius esse potest? Atqui audiveram aliquando ab iis, quibus crus aut brachium fuerat abscissum, se sibi videri adhuc interdum dolorem sentire in eâ parte corporis quâ carebant; ideoque etiam in me non plane certum esse videbatur membrum aliquod mihi dolere, quamvis sentirem in eo dolorem.

AT 77 Quibus etiam duas maxime generales dubitandi causas nuper adjeci: prima erat, quòd nulla unquam, dum vigilo, me sentire crediderim, quae non etiam inter dormiendum possim aliquando putare me sentire; cùm que illa, quae sentire mihi videor in somnis, non credam a rebus extra me positis mihi advenire, non advertebam quare id potius crederem de iis quae sentire mihi videor vigilando. Altera erat, quòd cùm authorem meae originis adhuc ignorarem, vel saltem ignorare me fingerem, nihil videbam obstare quominus essem naturâ ita constitutus ut fallerer, etiam in iis quae mihi verissima apparebant. Et quantum ad rationes quibus antea rerum sensibilium veritatem mihi persuaseram, non difficulter ad illas respondebam.

Cùm enim viderer ad multa impelli a naturâ, quae ratio dissuadebat, non multùm fidendum esse putabam iis quae a naturâ docentur. Et quamvis sensuum perceptiones a voluntate meâ non penderent, non ideo concludendum esse putabam illas a rebus a me diversis procedere, quia forte aliqua esse potest in meipso facultas, etsi mihi nondum cognita, illarum effectrix.

Nunc autem, postquam incipio meipsum meaeque authorem originis melius nosse, non quidem omnia, quae habere videor a sensibus, puto esse temere admit [78] tenda; sed neque etiam omnia in dubium revocanda.

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Later, however, many experiences gradually undermined all the trust I had placed in the senses. Sometimes towers that had looked round from a distance appeared square from close up; and very large statues standing on their tops did not look large to someone viewing them from the ground. In countless other such cases I found that the judgments of the external senses were mistaken. And not only of the external senses, but of the internal [77] ones too. For what can be more internal than pain? Yet I had sometimes heard from people who had had a leg or an arm cut off that they still occasionally seemed to feel pain in the part of the body they no longer had. And so it seemed that even in my own case it was not entirely certain that a particular limb was hurting me, even though I felt pain in it.

To these I recently added two very general reasons for doubt. The first was that there is nothing I have ever believed I sensed while awake that I could not also sometimes think I sense while asleep; and since I do not believe that what I seem to sense in dreams comes to me from things located outside me, I did not see why I should believe this any more of what I seem to sense while awake. The second was that, since I did not yet know the author of my origin—or at least was pretending not to know it—I saw nothing to prevent my having been so constituted by nature that I would be deceived even in what seemed to me most true. As for the reasons by which I had earlier persuaded myself of the truth of sensible things, I had no difficulty answering them.

For since I seemed to be driven by nature toward many things that reason advised against, I thought I should not place much trust in what nature teaches. And although the perceptions of the senses did not depend on my will, I did not think I should conclude from this that they came from things different from me, since there might perhaps be some faculty in me, though not yet known to me, that produced them.

But now that I am beginning to know myself and the author of my origin better, I do not think I should rashly [78] accept everything I seem to get from the senses; but neither should I call everything into doubt.

MIND AND BODY ARE REALLY DISTINCT

Descartes argues that since he can clearly conceive mind without body, the two are really distinct.

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AT 78	Et primò, quoniam scio omnia quae clare & distincte intelligo, talia a Deo fieri posse qualia illa intelligo, satis est quòd possim unam rem absque alterâ clare & distincte intelligere, ut certus sim unam ab alterâ esse diversam, quia potest saltem a Deo seorsim poni; & non refert a quâ potentiâ id fiat, ut diversa existimetur; ac proinde, ex hoc ipso quòd sciam me existere, quòdque interim nihil plane aliud ad naturam sive essentiam meam pertinere animadvertam, praeter hoc solum quòd sim res cogitans, recte concludo meam essentiam in hoc uno consistere, quòd sim res cogitans.	First, I know that everything I clearly and distinctly understand can be made by God just as I understand it. So it is enough that I can clearly and distinctly understand one thing without another for me to be certain that the one is different from the other, since they can be separated, at least by God; and it makes no difference by what power this is done for them to be judged different. Accordingly, from the very fact that I know that I exist, and that meanwhile I notice nothing else whatever belonging to my nature or essence except this alone, that I am a thinking thing, I rightly conclude that my essence consists in this one thing: that I am a thinking thing.
	Et quamvis fortasse (vel potiùs, ut postmodum dicam, pro certo) habeam corpus, quod mihi valde arcte conjunctum est, quia tamen ex unâ parte claram & distinctam habeo ideam meî ipsius, quatenus sum tantùm res cogitans, non extensa, & ex aliâ parte distinctam ideam corporis, quatenus est tantùm res extensa, non cogitans, certum est me a corpore meo revera esse distinctum, & absque illo posse existere.	And it may be that I have a body (or rather, as I shall say shortly, it is certain that I do) which is very closely joined to me. Nevertheless, on the one hand I have a clear and distinct idea of myself insofar as I am only a thinking thing, not an extended one; and on the other hand I have a distinct idea of body insofar as it is only an extended thing, not a thinking one. So it is certain that I am really distinct from my body and can exist without it.
	Praeterea invenio in me facultates specialibus quibusdam modis cogitandi, puta facultates imaginandi & sentiendi, sine quibus totum me possum clare & distincte intelligere, sed non vice versâ illas sine me, hoc est sine substantiâ intelligente cui insint: intellectionem enim nonnullam in suo formali conceptu includunt, unde percipio illas a me, ut modos a re, distingui. Agnosco etiam quasdam alias facultates, ut locum mutandi, varias figuras induendi, & similes, quae quidem non magis quàm praecedentes, absque [79] aliquâ substantiâ cui insint, possunt intelligi, nec proinde etiam absque illâ existere: sed manifestum est has, siquidem existant, inesse debere substantiae corporeae sive extensae, non autem intelligenti, quia nempe aliqua extensio, non autem ulla plane intellectio, in earum claro & distincto conceptu continetur.	Further, I find in myself faculties for certain special modes of thinking, namely the faculties of imagining and sensing. I can clearly and distinctly understand myself as a whole without them, but not, conversely, them without me—that is, without an understanding substance in which they inhere. For their formal concept includes some understanding; and from this I perceive that they are distinguished from me as modes are from a thing. I also recognize certain other faculties, such as those of changing place, taking on various shapes, and the like. These, no more than the preceding ones, can be understood without [79] some substance in which they inhere, and so they cannot exist without one either. But it is evident that these, if they do exist, must inhere in a corporeal or extended substance, not an understanding one, since their clear and distinct concept contains some extension, but no understanding whatever.

MATERIAL THINGS EXIST

Descartes argues that ideas of sensible things come from bodies, so material things exist.

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AT 79	Jam verò est quidem in me passiva quaedam facultas sentiendi, sive ideas rerum sensibilium recipiendi & cognoscendi, sed ejus nullum usum habere possem, nisi quaedam activa etiam existeret, sive in me, sive in alio, facultas istas ideas producendi vel efficiendi.	Now there is indeed in me a certain passive faculty of sensing, that is, of receiving and recognizing the ideas of sensible things. But I could make no use of it unless there also existed, either in me or in something else, a certain active faculty of producing or bringing about these ideas.
	Atque haec sane in me ipso esse non potest, quia nullam plane intellectionem praesupponit, & me non cooperante, sed saepe etiam invito, ideae istae producuntur: ergo superest ut sit in aliquâ substantiâ a me diversâ, in quâ quoniam omnis realitas vel formaliter vel eminenter inesse debet, quae est objective in ideis ab istâ facultate productis (ut jam supra animadverti), vel haec substantia est corpus, sive natura corporea, in quâ nempe omnia formaliter continentur quae in ideis objective; vel certe Deus est, vel aliqua creatura corpore nobilior, in quâ continentur eminenter. Atqui, cùm Deus non sit fallax, omnino manifestum est illum nec per se immediate istas ideas mihi immittere, nec etiam mediante aliquâ creaturâ, in quâ earum realitas objectiva, non formaliter, sed eminenter tantùm contineatur.	This active faculty certainly cannot be in me myself, since it presupposes no understanding at all, and these ideas are produced without my cooperation, and often even against my will. It remains, then, that it is in some substance different from me. And since that substance must contain, either formally or eminently, all the reality that is objectively in the ideas produced by this faculty (as I noted above), this substance is either body—that is, corporeal nature, which contains formally everything that is in the ideas objectively—or else it is God, or some creature nobler than body, which contains it eminently. But since God is not a deceiver, it is entirely evident that he does not send these ideas to me either immediately by himself or by means of some creature in which their objective reality is contained not formally but only eminently.
	Cùm enim nullam plane facultatem mihi dederit ad hoc agnoscendum, sed contrà magnam [80] propensionem ad credendum illas a rebus corporeis emitti, non video quâ ratione posset intelligi ipsum non esse fallacem, si aliunde quàm a rebus corporeis emitterentur. Ac proinde res corporeae existunt. Non tamen forte omnes tales omnino existunt, quales illas sensu comprehendo, quoniam ista sensuum comprehensio in multis valde obscura est & confusa; sed saltem illa omnia in iis sunt, quae clare & distincte intelligo, id est omnia, generaliter spectata, quae in purae Matheseos objecto comprehenduntur.	For he has given me no faculty at all for recognizing any such source, but on the contrary a great [80] propensity to believe that the ideas are sent from corporeal things. So I do not see how he could be understood not to be a deceiver if they were sent from anywhere other than corporeal things. Therefore corporeal things exist. Yet perhaps they do not all exist exactly as I grasp them by the senses, since this sensory grasp is in many cases very obscure and confused. But at least everything that I clearly and distinctly understand is in them —that is, everything, considered in general, that falls within the object of pure mathematics.
AT 80	Quantum autem attinet ad reliqua quae vel tantùm particularia sunt, ut quòd sol sit talis magnitudinis aut figurae &c., vel minus clare intellecta, ut lumen, sonus, dolor, & similia, quamvis valde dubia & incerta sint, hoc tamen ipsum, quòd Deus non sit fallax, quòdque idcirco fieri non possit ut ulla falsitas in meis opinionibus reperiatur, nisi aliqua etiam sit in me facultas a Deo	As for the other things, which are either merely particular—for example, that the sun is of such-and-such a size or shape, and so on—or less clearly understood, such as light, sound, pain, and the like: although they are very doubtful and uncertain, still the very fact that God is not a deceiver, and that it is therefore impossible for any falsity to

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tributa ad illam emendandam, certam mihi spem ostendit veritatis etiam in iis assequendae.	be found in my opinions unless there is also some faculty in me, given by God, for correcting it, offers me a sure hope of reaching the truth even in these matters.
Et sane non dubium est quin ea omnia quae doceor a naturâ aliquid habeant veritatis: per naturam enim, generaliter spectatam, nihil nunc aliud quàm vel Deum, ipsum, vel rerum creatarum coordinationem a Deo institutam intelligo; nec aliud per naturam meam in particulari, quàm complexionem eorum omnium quae mihi a Deo sunt tributa.	And there is certainly no doubt that everything I am taught by nature has some truth in it. For by nature, considered in general, I now understand nothing other than either God himself or the ordered system of created things established by God; and by my own nature in particular, nothing other than the totality of all the things that God has given me.
Nihil autem est quod me ista natura magis expresse doceat, quàm quòd habeam corpus, cui male est cùm dolorem sentio, quod cibo vel potu indiget, cùm famem aut sitim patior, & similia; nec proinde dubitare debeo, quin aliquid in eo sit veritatis. [81]	Now there is nothing that this nature teaches me more explicitly than that I have a body, which is in a bad way when I feel pain, which needs food or drink when I suffer hunger or thirst, and so on. So I ought not to doubt that there is some truth in this. [81]

THE UNION OF MIND AND BODY

Descartes explains the mind's close union with the body, why the senses sometimes mislead, and dismisses the dream doubt.

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AT 81	Docet etiam natura, per istos sensus doloris, famis, sitis & c., me non tantùm adesse meo corpori ut nauta adest navigio, sed illi arctissime esse conjunctum & quasi permixtum, adeo ut unum quid cum illo componam. Alioqui enim, cùm corpus laeditur, ego, qui nihil aliud sum quàm res cogitans, non sentirem idcirco dolorem, sed puro intellectu laesionem istam perciperem, ut nauta visu percipit si quid in nave frangatur; & cùm corpus cibo vel potu indiget, hoc ipsum expresse intelligerem, non confusos famis & sitis sensus haberem. Nam certe isti sensus sitis, famis, doloris &c., nihil aliud sunt quàm confusi quidam cogitandi modi ab unione & quasi permixtione mentis cum corpore exorti.	Nature also teaches me, through these sensations of pain, hunger, thirst, and so on, that I am not merely present in my body as a sailor is present in a ship, but that I am very closely joined to it and, as it were, intermingled with it, so that I make up a single whole with it. For otherwise, when the body is hurt, I, who am nothing but a thinking thing, would not feel pain on that account, but would perceive the damage by the pure intellect, as a sailor perceives by sight if anything in his ship breaks. And when the body needs food or drink, I would understand this explicitly, and would not have confused sensations of hunger and thirst. For these sensations of thirst, hunger, pain, and so on are certainly nothing but confused modes of thinking that arise from the union and, as it were, intermingling of the mind with the body.
	Praeterea etiam doceor a naturâ varia circa meum corpus alia corpora existere, ex quibus nonnulla mihi prosequenda sunt, alia fugienda. Et certe, ex eo quòd valde diversos sentiam colores, sonos, odores, sapores, calorem, duritiem, & similia, recte concludo, aliquas esse in corporibus, a quibus variae istae sensuum perceptiones adveniunt, varietates iis respondentes, etiamsi forte iis non similes; atque ex eo quòd quaedam	I am also taught by nature that various other bodies exist around my body, some of which I should pursue and others avoid. And certainly, from the fact that I sense widely differing colors, sounds, smells, tastes, heat, hardness, and the like, I rightly conclude that in the bodies from which these various sense perceptions come there are some variations corresponding to them, even if

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	ex illis perceptionibus mihi gratae sint, aliae ingratae, plane certum est meum corpus, sive potius me totum, quatenus ex corpore & mente sum compositus, variis commodis & incommodis a circumjacentibus corporibus affici posse. [82]	perhaps not resembling them. And from the fact that some of these perceptions are pleasant to me and others unpleasant, it is entirely certain that my body—or rather, I as a whole, insofar as I am composed of body and mind—can be affected in various beneficial and harmful ways by the bodies around it. [82]
AT 82	Multa verò alia sunt quae, etsi videar a naturâ doctus esse, non tamen revera ab ipsâ, sed a consuetudine quâdam inconsiderate judicandi accepi, atque ideo falsa esse facile contingit: ut quòd omne spatium, in quo nihil plane occurrit quod meos sensus moveat, sit vacuum; quòd in corpore, exempli gratiâ, calido aliquid sit plane simile ideae caloris quae in me est, in albo aut viridi sit eadem albedo aut viriditas quam sentio, in amaro aut dulci idem sapor, & sic de caeteris; quòd & astra & turres, & quaevis alia remota corpora ejus sint tantùm magnitudinis & figurae, quam sensibus meis exhibent, & alia ejusmodi.	But there are many other things which, although I seem to have been taught them by nature, I have in fact received not from nature but from a certain habit of judging thoughtlessly, and so they may easily be false. For example: that any space in which there is nothing at all to stimulate my senses is empty; that in a hot body, for instance, there is something exactly like the idea of heat that is in me; that in a white or green body there is the same whiteness or greenness that I sense, and in a bitter or sweet one the same taste, and so on; that stars and towers and any other distant bodies have only the size and shape they display to my senses; and other things of this kind.
	Sed ne quid in hac re non satis distincte percipiam, accuratiùs debeo definire quid proprie intelligam, cùm dico me aliquid doceri a naturâ. Nempe hîc naturam strictiùs sumo, quàm pro complexione eorum omnium quae mihi a Deo tributa sunt; in hac enim complexione multa continentur quae ad mentem solam pertinent, ut quòd percipiam id quod factum est infectum esse non posse, & reliqua omnia quae lumine naturali sunt nota, de quibus hîc non est sermo; multa etiam quae ad solum corpus spectant, ut quòd deorsum tendat, & similia, de quibus etiam non ago, sed de iis tantùm quae mihi, ut composito ex mente & corpore, a Deo tributa sunt.	But so that I do not perceive anything in this matter less than distinctly, I must define more precisely what exactly I mean when I say that I am taught something by nature. Here I am taking nature in a narrower sense than the totality of all the things God has given me. For that totality contains many things that belong to the mind alone—such as my perceiving that what has been done cannot be undone, and everything else known by the natural light—which are not under discussion here. It also contains many things that concern the body alone, such as its tending downward, and the like, which I am not dealing with either. I am dealing only with what God has given me as a composite of mind and body.
	Ideoque haec natura docet quidem ea refugere quae sensum doloris inferunt, & ea prosequi quae sensum voluptatis, & talia; sed non apparet illam praeterea nos docere ut quicquam ex istis sensuum perceptionibus sine praevio intellectûs examine de rebus extra nos positis concludamus, quia de iis verum scire [83] ad mentem solam, non autem ad compositum, videtur pertinere.	So this nature does indeed teach me to avoid what brings a sensation of pain and to pursue what brings a sensation of pleasure, and so on. But it does not appear that it also teaches us to conclude anything from these sense perceptions about things located outside us without a prior examination by the intellect, since knowing the truth about such things seems to belong [83] to the mind alone, not to the composite.
AT 83	Ita quamvis stella non magis oculum meum quàm ignis exiguae facis afficiat, nulla tamen in eo realis sive positiva propensio est ad credendum illam non esse	Thus, although a star affects my eye no more than the flame of a small torch, there is nonetheless no real or positive propensity in it to believe that the

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majorem, sed hoc sine ratione ab ineunte aetate judicavi; & quamvis ad ignem accedens sentio calorem, ut etiam ad eundem nimis prope accedens sentio dolorem, nulla profecto ratio est quae suadeat in igne aliquid esse simile isti calori, ut neque etiam isti dolori, sed tantummodo in eo aliquid esse, quodcunque demum sit, quod istos in nobis sensus caloris vel doloris efficiat;

& quamvis etiam in aliquo spatio nihil sit quod moveat sensum, non ideo sequitur in eo nullum esse corpus: sed video me in his aliisque permultis ordinem naturae pervertere esse assuetum, quia nempe sensuum perceptionibus, quae proprie tantùm a naturâ datae sunt ad menti significandum quaenam composito, cujus pars est, commoda sint vel incommoda, & eatenus sunt satis clarae & distinctae, utor tanquam regulis certis ad immediate dignoscendum quaenam sit corporum extra nos positorum essentia, de quâ tamen nihil nisi valde obscure & confuse significant.

Atqui jam ante satis perspexi quâ ratione, non obstante Dei bonitate, judicia mea falsa esse contingat. Sed nova hîc occurrit difficultas circa illa ipsa quae tanquam persequenda vel fugienda mihi a naturâ exhibentur, atque etiam circa internos sensus in quibus errores videor deprehendisse: ut cùm quis, grato cibi alicujus sapore delusus, venenum intus latens assumit. [84] Sed nempe tunc tantùm a naturâ impellitur ad illud appetendum in quo gratus sapor consistit, non autem ad venenum, quod plane ignorat; nihilque hinc aliud concludi potest, quàm naturam istam non esse omnisciam: quod non mirum, quia, cùm homo sit res limitata, non alia illi competit quàm limitatae perfectionis.

AT 84 At verò non raro etiam in iis erramus ad quae a naturâ impellimur: ut cùm ii qui aegrotant, potum vel cibum appetunt sibi paulo post nociturum. Dici forsan hîc poterit, illos ob id errare, quòd natura eorum sit corrupta; sed hoc difficultatem non tollit, quia non minus vere homo aegrotus creatura Dei est quàm sanus; nec proinde minus videtur repugnare illum a Deo fallacem naturam habere.

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star is no larger; I have simply judged so, without reason, since early childhood. And although I feel heat when I approach a fire, and pain when I approach it too closely, there is really no reason to persuade me that there is something in the fire resembling that heat, any more than something resembling that pain; there is reason only to think that there is something in it, whatever it may turn out to be, that produces these sensations of heat or pain in us;

and although there may be nothing in some space that stimulates the senses, it does not follow that there is no body in it. But I see that in these and very many other cases I have been in the habit of perverting the order of nature. The perceptions of the senses were properly given by nature only to signal to the mind what is beneficial or harmful to the composite of which it is a part, and to that extent they are clear and distinct enough. Yet I use them as if they were reliable rules for discerning immediately the essence of bodies located outside us—something about which they signal nothing except very obscurely and confusedly.

I have already seen well enough how, despite the goodness of God, it happens that my judgments are false. But a new difficulty arises here concerning the very things that nature presents to me as to be pursued or avoided, and also concerning the internal senses, in which I seem to have detected errors: as when someone, deceived by the pleasant taste of some food, swallows poison hidden inside it. [84] But in that case, of course, he is driven by nature only to desire the thing in which the pleasant taste lies, not the poison, of which his nature is quite ignorant. Nothing can be concluded from this except that this nature is not omniscient. And that is not surprising: since a human being is a limited thing, the only perfection that belongs to him is a limited one.

But we quite often go wrong even in the things toward which nature drives us, as when sick people desire drink or food that will harm them shortly afterward. It might perhaps be said here that they go wrong because their nature is corrupted. But this does not remove the difficulty, since a sick man is no less truly a creature of God than a healthy one; and so it seems no less contradictory that he should have a deceptive nature from God.

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Atque ut horologium ex rotis & ponderibus confectum non minus accurate leges omnes naturae observat, cùm male fabricatum est & horas non recte indicat, quàm cùm omni ex parte artificis voto satisfacit: ita, si considerem hominis corpus, quatenus machinamentum quòddam est ex ossibus, nervis, musculis, venis, sanguine & pellibus ita aptum & compositum, ut, etiamsi nulla in eo mens existeret, eosdem tamen haberet omnes motus qui nunc in eo non ab imperio voluntatis nec proinde a mente procedunt, facile agnosco illi aeque naturale fore, si, exempli causâ, hydrope laboret, eam faucium ariditatem pati, quae sitis sensum menti inferre solet, atque etiam ab illâ ejus nervos & reliquas partes ita disponi ut potum sumat ex quo morbus augeatur, quàm, cùm nullum tale in eo vitium est, a simili [85] faucium siccitate moveri ad potum sibi utile assumendum.	A clock made of wheels and weights observes all the laws of nature no less exactly when it is badly made and does not tell the hours correctly than when it satisfies its maker's wishes in every respect. In the same way, I may consider the human body as a kind of machine, so fitted together and composed of bones, nerves, muscles, veins, blood, and skin that even if no mind existed in it, it would still have all the same motions that now occur in it not by the command of the will, and so not from the mind. Considering it so, I easily recognize that it would be just as natural for this body—if, for example, it suffers from dropsy—to undergo the dryness of the throat that usually brings the sensation of thirst to the mind, and also to have its nerves and other parts so disposed by that dryness that it takes a drink which aggravates the disease, as it is for it, when there is no such defect in it, to be moved by a similar [85] dryness of the throat to take a drink that does it good.
AT 85 Et quamvis, respiciens ad praeconceptum horologii usum, dicere possim illud, cùm horas non recte indicat, a naturâ suâ deflectere; atque eodem modo, considerans machinamentum humani corporis tanquam comparatum ad motus qui in eo fieri solent, putem illud etiam a naturâ suâ aberrare, si ejus fauces sint aridae, cùm potus ad ipsius conservationem non prodest; satis tamen animadverto hanc ultimam naturae acceptionem ab alterâ multùm differre: haec enim nihil aliud est quàm denominatio a cogitatione meâ, hominem aegrotum & horologium male fabricatum cum ideâ hominis sani & horologii recte facti comparante, dependens, rebusque de quibus dicitur extrinseca; per illam verò aliquid intelligo quod revera in rebus reperitur, ac proinde nonnihil habet veritatis.	Now, with regard to the intended use of a clock, I might say that when it does not tell the hours correctly it departs from its nature. And in the same way, considering the machine of the human body as designed for the motions that usually occur in it, I might think that it too strays from its nature if its throat is dry when drink does not help to preserve it. Yet I see well enough that this last sense of "nature" is very different from the other. For this sense is nothing but a denomination that depends on my thought, when it compares a sick man and a badly made clock with the idea of a healthy man and a well-made clock; it is extrinsic to the things of which it is said. By the other sense, however, I understand something that is really found in things, and which therefore has some truth.[2]
Ac certe, etiamsi respiciendo ad corpus hydrope laborans, sit tantùm denominatio extrinseca, cùm dicitur ejus natura esse corrupta, ex eo quòd aridas habeat fauces, nec tamen egeat potu; respiciendo tamen ad compositum, sive ad mentem tali corpori unitam, non est pura denominatio, sed verus error naturae, quòd sitiat cùm potus est ipsi nociturus; ideoque hîc remanet inquirendum, quo pacto bonitas Dei non impediat quominus natura sic sumpta sit fallax.	And certainly, with regard to a body suffering from dropsy, it may be only an extrinsic denomination when its nature is said to be corrupted because it has a dry throat and yet does not need drink. But with regard to the composite—that is, the mind united to such a body—it is not a mere denomination but a true error of nature that it is thirsty when drink will harm it. So it remains to inquire here how the goodness of God does not

2 "Extrinsic denomination" is a scholastic term: a label applied to a thing on account of something outside it, not a feature the thing itself has.

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prevent nature, taken in this sense, from being deceptive.

Nempe imprimis hîc adverto magnam esse differentiam inter mentem & corpus, in eo quòd corpus ex naturâ suâ sit semper divisibile, mens autem plane [86] indivisibilis; nam sane cùm hanc considero, sive meipsum quatenus sum tantùm res cogitans, nullas in me partes possum distinguere, sed rem plane unam & integram me esse intelligo; & quamvis toti corpori tota mens unita esse videatur, abscisso tamen pede, vel brachio, vel quâvis aliâ corporis parte, nihil ideo de mente subductum esse cognosco; neque etiam facultates volendi, sentiendi, intelligendi &c. ejus partes dici possunt, quia una & eadem mens est quae vult, quae sentit, quae intelligit.

The first thing I notice here is that there is a great difference between mind and body, in that body is by its nature always divisible, whereas the mind is entirely [86] indivisible. For certainly, when I consider the mind—that is, myself insofar as I am only a thinking thing—I can distinguish no parts in myself, but understand myself to be a thing that is entirely one and whole. And although the whole mind seems to be united to the whole body, yet if a foot or an arm or any other part of the body is cut off, I know that nothing has thereby been taken away from the mind. Nor can the faculties of willing, sensing, understanding, and so on be called its parts, since it is one and the same mind that wills, that senses, that understands.

AT 86 Contrà verò nulla res corporea sive extensa potest a me cogitari, quam non facile in partes cogitatione dividam, atque hoc ipso illam divisibilem esse intelligam: quod unum sufficeret ad me docendum, mentem a corpore omnino esse diversam, si nondum illud aliunde satis scirem.

By contrast, I can think of no corporeal or extended thing that I cannot easily divide into parts in thought, and by that very fact understand to be divisible. This alone would be enough to teach me that the mind is entirely different from the body, if I did not already know it well enough from other sources.

Deinde adverto mentem non ab omnibus corporis partibus immediate affici, sed tantummodo a cerebro, vel forte etiam ab unâ tantùm exiguâ ejus parte, nempe ab eâ in quâ dicitur esse sensus communis; quae, quotiescunque eodem modo est disposita, menti idem exhibet, etiamsi reliquae corporis partes diversis interim modis possint se habere, ut probant innumera experimenta, quae hîc recensere non est opus.

Next I notice that the mind is not affected immediately by all parts of the body, but only by the brain, or perhaps even by just one small part of it —namely, the part in which the "common sense" is said to be. Whenever this part is disposed in the same way, it presents the same thing to the mind, even if the other parts of the body are meanwhile in various different conditions. Countless experiments prove this, and there is no need to review them here.

Adverto praeterea eam esse corporis naturam, ut nulla ejus pars possit ab aliâ parte aliquantum remotâ moveri, quin possit etiam moveri eodem modo a quâlibet ex iis quae interjacent, quamvis illa remotior nihil agat. Ut, exempli causâ, in fune A, B, C, D, si trahatur ejus ultima pars D, non alio pacto movebitur prima A, quàm moveri etiam posset, si traheretur una ex intermediis B vel C, & ultima D maneret immota.

I notice, further, that the nature of body is such that no part of it can be moved by another part some distance away without its also being possible for it to be moved in the same way by any of the parts in between, even if the more distant part does nothing. For example, in a cord A, B, C, D, if its far end D is pulled, the first part A will move in just the same way as it could also be moved if one of the intermediate parts, B or C, were pulled and the end D stayed still.

Nec dissimili ratione, cùm sentio dolorem pedis, docuit me Physica sensum illum fieri ope nervorum per pedem sparsorum, qui, inde ad cerebrum usque funium instar

In a similar way, when I feel pain in my foot, physics has taught me that this sensation occurs by means of nerves distributed through the foot.

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extensi, dum trahuntur in pede, trahunt etiam intimas cerebri partes ad quas pertingunt, quemdamque motum in iis excitant, qui institutus est a naturâ ut mentem afficiat sensu doloris tanquam in pede existentis. Sed quia illi nervi per tibiam, crus, lumbos, dorsum, & collum transire debent, ut a pede ad cerebrum perveniant, potest contingere ut, etiamsi eorum pars, quae est in pede, non attingatur, sed aliqua tantùm ex intermediis, idem plane ille motus fiat in cerebro qui fit pede male affecto, ex quo necesse erit ut mens sentiat eundem dolorem. Et idem de quolibet alio sensu est putandum.

Adverto denique, quandoquidem unusquisque ex motibus, qui fiunt in eâ parte cerebri quae immediate mentem afficit, non nisi unum aliquem sensum illi infert, nihil hac in re melius posse excogitari, quàm si eum inferat qui, ex omnibus quos inferre potest, ad hominis sani conservationem quàm maxime & quàm frequentissime conducit. Experientiam autem testari, tales esse omnes sensus nobis a naturâ inditos; ac proinde nihil plane in iis reperiri, quod non Dei potentiam bonitatemque testetur.

Ita, exempli causâ, [88] cùm nervi qui sunt in pede vehementer & praeter consuetudinem moventur, ille eorum motus, per spinae dorsi medullam ad intima cerebri pertingens, ibi menti signum dat ad aliquid sentiendum, nempe dolorem tanquam in pede existentem, a quo illa excitatur ad ejus causam, ut pedi infestam, quantum in se est, amovendam. Potuisset verò natura hominis a Deo sic constitui, ut ille idem motus in cerebro quidvis aliud menti exhiberet: nempe vel seipsum, quatenus est in cerebro, vel quatenus est in pede, vel in aliquo ex locis intermediis, vel denique aliud quidlibet; sed nihil aliud ad corporis conservationem aeque conduxisset.

AT 88 Eodem modo, cùm potu indigemus, quaedam inde oritur siccitas in gutture, nervos ejus movens & illorum ope cerebri interiora; hicque motus mentem afficit sensu sitis, quia nihil in toto hoc negotio nobis utilius est scire, quàm quòd potu ad conservationem valetudinis egeamus, & sic de caeteris.

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These nerves are stretched like cords from there all the way to the brain; when they are pulled in the foot, they also pull the inner parts of the brain that they reach, and set up a certain motion in them. And this motion has been established by nature to affect the mind with a sensation of pain as if existing in the foot. But because these nerves have to pass through the shin, thigh, loins, back, and neck to get from the foot to the brain, it can happen that even if the part of them that is in the foot is not touched, but only one of the intermediate parts, exactly the same motion occurs in the brain as occurs when the foot is injured; and from this it will necessarily follow that the mind feels the same pain. And the same must be thought of any other sensation.

Finally, I notice that each of the motions that occur in the part of the brain that immediately affects the mind brings it only one particular sensation. Given this, nothing better can be devised than that it should bring the one which, of all those it could bring, is most conducive, and most often conducive, to the preservation of a healthy human being. And experience testifies that all the sensations nature has given us are of this kind; and so nothing at all is found in them that does not testify to the power and goodness of God.

Thus, for example, [88] when the nerves in the foot are moved violently and unusually, their motion, passing through the spinal cord to the inner parts of the brain, gives the mind a signal there to sense something—namely, a pain as if existing in the foot. By this the mind is roused to do what it can to remove the cause, as harmful to the foot. God could, of course, have so constituted human nature that this same motion in the brain presented something else to the mind: either the motion itself, as it is in the brain, or as it is in the foot, or in one of the places in between, or anything else at all. But nothing else would have served the preservation of the body so well.

In the same way, when we need drink, a certain dryness arises in the throat as a result, moving its nerves and, through them, the inner parts of the brain; and this motion affects the mind with the sensation of thirst, because in this whole affair nothing is more useful for us to know than that we

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Ex quibus omnino manifestum est, non obstante immensâ Dei bonitate, naturam hominis ut ex mente & corpore compositi non posse non aliquando esse fallacem. Nam si quae causa, non in pede, sed in aliâ quâvis ex partibus per quas nervi a pede ad cerebrum porriguntur, vel etiam in ipso cerebro, eundem plane motum excitet qui solet excitari pede male affecto, sentietur dolor tanquam in pede, sensusque naturaliter falletur, quia, cùm ille idem motus in cerebro non possit nisi eundem semper sensum menti inferre, multoque frequentius oriri soleat a causâ quae laedit pedem, quàm ab aliâ alibi existente, rationi consenta [89] neum est ut pedis potius quàm alterius partis dolorem menti semper exhibeat.

AT 89 Et si quando faucium ariditas, non ut solet ex eo quòd ad corporis valetudinem potus conducat, sed ex contrariâ aliquâ causâ oriatur, ut in hydropico contingit, longe melius est illam tunc fallere, quàm si contrà semper falleret, cùm corpus est bene constitutum; & sic de reliquis.

Atque haec consideratio plurimum juvat, non modo ut errores omnes quibus natura mea obnoxia est animadvertam, sed etiam ut illos aut emendare aut vitare facile possim. Nam sane, cùm sciam omnes sensus circa ea, quae ad corporis commodum spectant, multo frequentius verum indicare quàm falsum, possimque uti fere semper pluribus ex iis ad eandem rem examinandam, & insuper memoriâ, quae praesentia cum praecedentibus connectit, & intellectu, qui jam omnes errandi causas perspexit; non amplius vereri debeo ne illa, quae mihi quotidie a sensibus exhibentur, sint falsa, sed hyperbolicae superiorum dierum dubitationes, ut risu dignae, sunt explodendae.

Praesertim summa illa de somno, quem a vigiliâ non distinguebam; nunc enim adverto permagnum inter utrumque esse discrimen, in eo quòd nunquam insomnia cum reliquis omnibus actionibus vitae a memoriâ conjungantur, ut ea quae vigilanti occurrunt; nam sane, si quis, dum vigilo, mihi derepente appareret, statimque postea dispareret, ut fit in somnis, ita scilicet ut nec unde

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need drink to preserve our health. And so on in other cases.

From all this it is entirely evident that, despite the immense goodness of God, the nature of a human being, as composed of mind and body, cannot but be deceptive at times. For suppose some cause—not in the foot, but in any of the other parts through which the nerves stretch from the foot to the brain, or even in the brain itself—sets up exactly the same motion that is usually set up when the foot is injured. Then pain will be felt as if in the foot, and the senses will naturally be deceived. For that same motion in the brain can only ever bring the same sensation to the mind; and it usually arises much more often from a cause that injures the foot than from one existing elsewhere. So it is reasonable [89] that it should always present to the mind a pain in the foot rather than in some other part.

And if dryness of the throat sometimes arises not, as it usually does, from the fact that drink would help the body's health, but from some contrary cause, as happens in someone with dropsy, it is far better that it should deceive in that case than that it should, on the contrary, always deceive when the body is in good condition. And so on in other cases.

This consideration is of the greatest help, not only for noticing all the errors to which my nature is liable, but also for being able to correct or avoid them easily. For I know that in matters concerning the body's welfare all the senses indicate what is true much more often than what is false; and I can almost always use several of them to examine the same thing, and in addition my memory, which connects present things with past ones, and my intellect, which has now seen all the causes of error. So I should no longer fear that what the senses present to me every day is false. Instead, the hyperbolic doubts of the past few days should be dismissed as laughable.

Especially that chief doubt about sleep, which I could not distinguish from waking. For now I notice that there is a very great difference between the two, in that dreams are never linked by memory with all the other actions of life, as what happens to us while awake is. Certainly, if while I was awake someone suddenly appeared to me and

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	venisset, nec quo abiret, viderem, non immerito spec [90] trum potius, aut phantasma in cerebro meo effictum, quàm verum hominem esse judicarem. Cùm verò eae res occurrunt, quas distincte, unde, ubi, & quando mihi adveniant, adverto, earumque perceptionem absque ullâ interruptione cum totâ reliquâ vitâ connecto, plane certus sum, non in somnis, sed vigilanti occurrere.	immediately afterward disappeared, as happens in dreams, so that I saw neither where he came from nor where he went, I would not be wrong to judge him a [90] ghost, or a phantom formed in my brain, rather than a real man. But when things occur to me and I distinctly notice where they come from, where they are, and when they come to me, and I connect my perception of them with the whole rest of my life without any interruption, I am entirely certain that they are occurring to me not in sleep but while I am awake.
AT 90	Nec de ipsarum veritate debeo vel minimum dubitare, si, postquam omnes sensus, memoriam & intellectum ad illas examinandas convocavi, nihil mihi, quod cum caeteris pugnet, ab ullo ex his nuntietur. Ex eo enim quòd Deus non sit fallax, sequitur omnino in talibus me non falli. Sed quia rerum agendarum necessitas non semper tam accurati examinis moram concedit, fatendum est humanam vitam circa res particulares saepe erroribus esse obnoxiam, & naturae nostrae infirmitas est agnoscenda.	And I ought not to have even the slightest doubt about their truth if, after I have called on all the senses, my memory, and my intellect to examine them, none of these reports to me anything that conflicts with the others. For from the fact that God is not a deceiver it follows that in such cases I am not deceived at all. But since the pressure of things to be done does not always allow time for so careful an examination, it must be admitted that human life is often liable to errors about particular things, and we must acknowledge the weakness of our nature.