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In Discourse on the Method, Descartes recalls, I entirely abandoned the study of letters. Resolving to seek no knowledge other than that of which could be found in myself or else in the great book of the world, I spent the rest of my youth traveling, visiting courts and armies, mixing with people of diverse temperaments and ranks, gathering various experiences, testing myself in the situations which fortune offered me, and at all times reflecting upon whatever came my way so as to derive some profit from it. Given his ambition to become a professional military officer, in 1614, Descartes joined, as a mercenary, the Protestant Dutch States Army in Breda under the command of Maurice of Nassau, [24] and undertook a formal study of military engineering, as established by Simon Stevin. Descartes, therefore, received much encouragement in Breda to advance his knowledge of mathematics. Together they worked on free fall, catenary, conic section, and fluid statics. Both believed that it was necessary to create a method that thoroughly linked mathematics and physics. While within, he had three dreams [31] and believed that a divine spirit revealed to him a new philosophy. However, it is likely that what Descartes considered to be his second dream was actually an episode of exploding head syndrome. Descartes discovered this basic truth quite soon: He visited Basilica della Santa Casa in Loreto, then visited various countries before returning to France, and during the next few years spent time in Paris. It was there that he composed his first essay on method: Descartes returned to the Dutch Republic in 1628. In Amsterdam, he had a relationship with a servant girl, Helena Jans van der Strom, with whom he had a daughter, Francine, who was born in Deventer. She died of scarlet fever at the age of 5. Nevertheless, in 1637 he published part of this work [44] in three essays: The first was never to accept anything for true which I did not clearly know to be such; that is to say, carefully to avoid precipitancy and prejudice, and to comprise nothing more in my judgment than what was presented to my mind so clearly and distinctly as to exclude all ground of doubt. In 1641 he published a metaphysics work, *Meditationes de Prima Philosophia* *Meditations on First Philosophy*, written in Latin and thus addressed to the learned. In 1642, Cartesian philosophy was condemned at the University of Utrecht, and Descartes was obliged to flee to the Hague, and settled in Egmond-Binnen. Descartes began through Alfonso Polloti, an Italian general in Dutch service a long correspondence with Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia, devoted mainly to moral and psychological subjects. This edition Descartes also dedicated to Princess Elisabeth. In the preface to the French edition, Descartes praised true philosophy as a means to attain wisdom. He identifies four ordinary sources to reach wisdom and finally says that there is a fifth, better and more secure, consisting in the search for first causes. She was interested in and stimulated Descartes to publish the "*Passions of the Soul*", a work based on his correspondence with Princess Elisabeth. There, Chanut and Descartes made observations with a Torricellian barometer, a tube with mercury. Challenging Blaise Pascal, Descartes took the first set of barometric readings in Stockholm to see if atmospheric pressure could be used in forecasting the weather. Soon it became clear they did not like each other; she did not like his mechanical philosophy, nor did he appreciate her interest in Ancient Greek. By 15 January, Descartes had seen Christina only four or five times. On 1 February he contracted pneumonia and died on 11 February. Pies, a German scholar, published a book questioning this account, based on a letter by Johann van Wullen, who had been sent by Christina to treat him, something Descartes refused, and more arguments against its veracity have been raised since. Cartesianism Initially, Descartes arrives at only a single first principle: Thought cannot be separated from me, therefore, I exist *Discourse on the Method and Principles of Philosophy*. Most famously, this is known as *cogito ergo sum* English: Therefore, Descartes concluded, if he doubted, then something or someone must be doing the doubting, therefore the very fact that he doubted proved his existence. Descartes concludes that he can be certain that he exists because he thinks. But in what form? He perceives his body through the use of the senses; however, these have previously been unreliable. So Descartes determines that the only indubitable knowledge is that he is a thinking thing. Thinking is what he does, and his power must come from his essence. Descartes defines "thought" *cogitatio* as "what happens in me such that I am immediately conscious of it, insofar as I am conscious of it". Thinking is

thus every activity of a person of which the person is immediately conscious. In this manner, Descartes proceeds to construct a system of knowledge, discarding perception as unreliable and, instead, admitting only deduction as a method. Known as Cartesian dualism or Mind-Body Dualism, his theory on the separation between the mind and the body went on to influence subsequent Western philosophies. In *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Descartes attempted to demonstrate the existence of God and the distinction between the human soul and the body. While many contemporary readers of Descartes found the distinction between mind and body difficult to grasp, he thought it was entirely straightforward. Descartes employed the concept of modes, which are the ways in which substances exist. In *Principles of Philosophy*, Descartes explained, "we can clearly perceive a substance apart from the mode which we say differs from it, whereas we cannot, conversely, understand the mode apart from the substance". To perceive a mode apart from its substance requires an intellectual abstraction, [72] which Descartes explained as follows: The intellectual abstraction consists in my turning my thought away from one part of the contents of this richer idea the better to apply it to the other part with greater attention. Thus, when I consider a shape without thinking of the substance or the extension whose shape it is, I make a mental abstraction. Thus Descartes reasoned that God is distinct from humans, and the body and mind of a human are also distinct from one another. But that the mind was utterly indivisible: Everything that happened, be it the motion of the stars or the growth of a tree, was supposedly explainable by a certain purpose, goal or end that worked its way out within nature. Aristotle called this the "final cause", and these final causes were indispensable for explaining the ways nature operated. With his theory on dualism Descartes fired the opening shot for the battle between the traditional Aristotelian science and the new science of Kepler and Galileo which denied the final cause for explaining nature. For Descartes the only place left for the final cause was the mind or *res cogitans*. Therefore, while Cartesian dualism paved the way for modern physics, it also held the door open for religious beliefs about the immortality of the soul. A human was according to Descartes a composite entity of mind and body. Descartes gave priority to the mind and argued that the mind could exist without the body, but the body could not exist without the mind. In *Meditations* Descartes even argues that while the mind is a substance, the body is composed only of "accidents". If this were not so, I, who am nothing but a thinking thing, would not feel pain when the body was hurt, but would perceive the damage purely by the intellect, just as a sailor perceives by sight if anything in his ship is broken. What exactly is the relationship of union between the mind and the body of a person? It was this theory of innate knowledge that later led philosopher John Locke to combat the theory of empiricism, which held that all knowledge is acquired through experience. These animal spirits were believed to be light and roaming fluids circulating rapidly around the nervous system between the brain and the muscles, and served as a metaphor for feelings, like being in high or bad spirit. These animal spirits were believed to affect the human soul, or passions of the soul. Descartes distinguished six basic passions: All of these passions, he argued, represented different combinations of the original spirit, and influenced the soul to will or want certain actions. He argued, for example, that fear is a passion that moves the soul to generate a response in the body. In line with his dualist teachings on the separation between the soul and the body, he hypothesized that some part of the brain served as a connector between the soul and the body and singled out the pineal gland as connector. Thus different motions in the gland cause various animal spirits. But he also argued that the animal spirits that moved around the body could distort the commands from the pineal gland, thus humans had to learn how to control their passions. He argued that external motions such as touch and sound reach the endings of the nerves and affect the animal spirits. Heat from fire affects a spot on the skin and sets in motion a chain of reactions, with the animal spirits reaching the brain through the central nervous system, and in turn animal spirits are sent back to the muscles to move the hand away from the fire. He challenged the views of his contemporaries that the soul was divine, thus religious authorities regarded his books as dangerous. Descartes believed that the brain resembled a working machine and unlike many of his contemporaries believed that mathematics and mechanics could explain the most complicated processes of the mind. In the 20th century Alan Turing advanced computer science based on mathematical biology as inspired by Descartes. His theories on reflexes also served as the foundation for advanced physiological theories more than years after his death. The physiologist Ivan Pavlov was a great admirer of Descartes. Like the rest of the sciences, ethics had its

roots in metaphysics. However, as he was a convinced rationalist, Descartes clearly states that reason is sufficient in the search for the goods that we should seek, and virtue consists in the correct reasoning that should guide our actions. Nevertheless, the quality of this reasoning depends on knowledge, because a well-informed mind will be more capable of making good choices, and it also depends on mental condition. For this reason, he said that a complete moral philosophy should include the study of the body. He discussed this subject in the correspondence with Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia, and as a result wrote his work *The Passions of the Soul*, that contains a study of the psychosomatic processes and reactions in man, with an emphasis on emotions or passions. This is known as his "Provisional Morals". Because God is benevolent, he can have some faith in the account of reality his senses provide him, for God has provided him with a working mind and sensory system and does not desire to deceive him. From this supposition, however, he finally establishes the possibility of acquiring knowledge about the world based on deduction and perception. Regarding epistemology, therefore, he can be said to have contributed such ideas as a rigorous conception of foundationalism and the possibility that reason is the only reliable method of attaining knowledge. He, nevertheless, was very much aware that experimentation was necessary to verify and validate theories. One of these is founded upon the possibility of thinking the "idea of a being that is supremely perfect and infinite," and suggests that "of all the ideas that are in me, the idea that I have of God is the most true, the most clear and distinct. His attempt to ground theological beliefs on reason encountered intense opposition in his time, however:

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*"Je pense donc je suis." Merci de partager cette vidéo et de vous abonner à ma chaîne. Joseph*

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*Claire Beyssade & Jean-Marie Marandin undertake to analyze two aspects of speech acts, one pertaining to the Speaker, the other to the Addressee (Speaker's Call on Addressee).*

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