Descartes’ Nature of Mind & View of Perception:

Everything in God’s created universe that is not a body is a mind, or self. Since a person is a self, the nature of the mind is much better known that the nature of the body. Why? Because we “observe many more qualities in our mind than in any other thing.” All these qualities—willing, imagining, desiring, thinking, hoping, doubting, perceiving—and so on—are, however, modes of one of the other of 2 basic powers, “one of which consists in ... the operation of the understanding (the power which men seek truth), and the other in volition (infinite free will), or the operation of the will.” Understanding is distinguished between (1) thinking (which is cognition of the world as it is), namely, a universe of unextended minds & of material substances possessing only “length, breadth, and depth,” & (2) sensing, which is perception of a world of colored, sounding, & odorous bodies.

Substantive Dualism: How can the mind come to know its objects?

The mind cannot go into the world to study, nor can the world, conceived of as matter in motion, come into the mind?

The cognitive link between mind and the world is an idea, a state of the mind. Ideas are modes of thinking (not substances)

A true idea represents in the mind the object out there that is its cause. Ideas represents things:

AN IDEA IS THE COGNITIVE LINK.

1. Our source of errors is our tendency to run into decisions without sufficient evidence to make appropriate judgment. If we would withhold judgment until we saw the conclusion clearly & distinctly, then we would never fall into error. Error is the disparity for knowledge & our limited human capacity for satisfying that thirst. The will is free (it is as perfect as God’s will). So, our infinite will constantly takes us beyond the grasp of our finite intellect.

2. This is a radical new orientation in philosophy. Before Galilean mechanics and matter in motion appeared on science, there was no reason to assert a radical difference between minds and objects. In fact, it was assumed that the mind and its objects have an infinity for each other, and this affinity was precisely at the basis of all earlier accounts of knowledge.

Plato and Aristotle held that what the mind knows is reality itself whether this was understood as “form” or an essence”. In this regard, Aristotle was as much a realist as Plato. Even though they did not agree that the universals are separate from particulars, even though they held that they had to be known in and through the particulars, he still held that what the mind knows is the universal itself; it is an idea of the universal.