CHAPTER – III

DESCARTES’ CONCEPTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS
Rene Descartes, the prophet of the new era, is unarguably one of the greatest philosophers in the history of western philosophy. He lived at a time when scholastic philosophy was in an uncertain state surrounded by skepticism. Descartes worked hard to refute skepticism and to provide a solid foundation to the modern thought. He succeeded in shaping the modern philosophy by breaking the tradition and he is deservedly known simply as "the father of modern philosophy".

The great works of Descartes produced during his fertile working life are--- "Rules for the Direction of the Mind" (Regulae ad Directionem Ingenii), "Discourse on the Method" (Discours de la Methode), "Principles of Philosophy" (Principia Philosophiae), "The Passions of the Soul" (Les Passions de l'Arme), and "Meditations on First Philosophy" (Meditations de prima Philosophia). In addition to these "The Objections and Replies", "The Search After Truth by Means of Natural Light" and "Notes Directed Against a Certain Programme" a few of his writings which claims philosophical importance. It would be useful to outline the subject matters of Descartes' philosophical works in brief.

"Rules for the Direction of the Mind" (Regulae), published posthumously in a Dutch translation in 1684, is divided into three parts, each composed of twelve rules. The first twelve rules deal with simple propositions, particular attention to the cognitive operations of intuition and deduction by which these propositions are known. The next set of
rules is concerned with perfectly understood problems – mainly mathematical problems which can be expressed in the form of equations. The last set, which is altogether missing, purported to deal with imperfectly understood problems – mostly empirical or ‘practical’ problems which can not be expressed in the form of equations. The work as a whole unveils his first attempts to develop a universal method for discovering the truth.

"Discourse on the Method" (Discourse), published in 1637, aims to present a novel philosophical method of increasing one’s knowledge. It is divided into six parts. The first part shows Descartes' dissatisfaction with his scholastic educational upbringing. The second part presents the rules of the method. The third part sketches a provisional moral code consisting of just a few maxims. The fourth part of the Discourse summarizes his metaphysical views, including what is arguably philosophy’s most famous argument: “I am thinking, therefore I exist" ('je pense donc je Suis', or 'cogito-ergo-sum'). The fifth part includes a synopsis of The World together with the doctrine of the bête – machine or animal machine which asserts that all the functions and movement of non-human animals can be explained without having to suggest that animals have souls like humans do, as if animals were splendid and highly complex natural automata. The final part outlines his views on scientific experimentation and his future research plans.
"Principles of Philosophy" (Principles), published in 1647, is of four parts, each divided into a number of concise articles – there are five hundred and four in all. Part one of this work deals with metaphysics. Part two covers the principles of physics. Part three examines the nature of the universe seen in the light of the principles expounded in the previous part. Part four gives an account of the earth’s origin and variety of terrestrial phenomena, including magnetic and gravitational forces, the nature of tides, and fire.

"Passions of the Soul" (Passions), published in 1649, consists of three parts, each of them having a large number of small articles. The work offers taxonomy of the passions or emotions, and valuable material on Descartes’ views on ethics, psychology, physiology and philosophy of mind. In particular it attempts to elucidate the Cartesian account of the relation between mind and body.

"Meditations on First Philosophy" (Meditations), was first published in Latin in 1641 and it was the philosophical magnum opus of Descartes. The work consists of six marvelous Meditations. In the first Meditation, Descartes showed how the method of doubt can be exercised to clear our minds from previous opinions and prejudices which fail to be certain and indubitable. Here Descartes found that all the former beliefs, prejudices including scientific rules are doubtful. In the second Meditation, Descartes followed the methodic doubt in search of a solid epistemological footing. At last he found that even if
there is a deceiver of supreme power and cunning who is deliberately and constantly deceiving him, the demon will never bring it about that he is nothing so long as he thinks that he is something. Here Descartes discovered a truth which is indubitable, incorrigible and self verifying, namely, "I exist" (Cogito-ergo-sum" or "I am thinking, therefore I exist"). After getting the indubitable knowledge of his own existence Descartes attempted to prove the existence of things beyond himself. In order to do this it becomes necessary to prove the existence of an all-perfect God who is not a deceiver.

In the third meditation, Descartes conducts an attempt to prove God's existence usually known as "trademark argument". He realizes that he is not perfect yet he has in him the idea of supreme perfection. Yet this idea can not come from himself, thus it must come from outside him. He argues that the idea must come from God Himself, therefore he concludes that God exists. In the fourth meditation, Descartes continues his discussion of God's attributes and considers what can be referred to as the problem of error. He claims to have just shown that God is all-perfect and not a deceiver, yet knows that he himself is subject to error. Descartes propounds that a universe with some of its parts not immune to error, while others are immune, is more perfect than a world whose parts are all exactly alike. Finally, he goes on to explain that the source of error lies not in God but in the precipitate application of our will to the objects of reason. In the fifth meditation,
Descartes offers a second proof of the existence of God known as the "ontological argument". This argument can be stated briefly as follows: God is supremely perfect; existence is a part of supreme perfection; therefore, God exists.

In the sixth meditation, Descartes attempts to demonstrate the existence of the material world and the real distinction between the mind and the body. Here Descartes argues that God is not a deceiver and that I possess ideas about the physical world, it follows that such a world actually exists and is the cause of such ideas. He purports to show that the mind and the body have utterly distinct essences or natures. Descartes maintains that human beings are made out of the union of two incommensurable substances – res cogitans, thinking substance, or mind, and res extensa, extended corporeal substance, or body. He claims that the rational soul can not be derived in anyway from the qualities of matter but must be specially created (by God). The thinking part of us makes us distinctly human. On the other hand, that part which is derivable from, or in anyway a function of, our body, in particular our brain, does not make us distinctly human.

The brief survey of Descartes' works showed that he has emphasized his concept of mind and consciousness in the pages of "Meditation" together with his "Discourse" and "Passions". In the "Objections and Replies" and "Notes Against a Certain Programme" Descartes clarifies his position regarding the concept of conscious
mind. This chapter is a humble attempt to investigate Descartes' concept of consciousness as reflected in his philosophical classics par excellence mentioned above.

Being dissatisfied with the uncertain state of philosophy of his time Descartes wanted to establish it on a certain state like mathematics. So, he tried to give up all of his presuppositions and made a fresh start in philosophical thinking. As he says, "...If I am to establish anything firm and lasting in the science, I must once for all, and by a deliberate effort, rid myself of all those opinions to which I have hitherto given credence, starting entirely a new, and building, from the foundation up" (AT-VII, P-18). In order to free his mind from presupposition, superstitions etc., Descartes applied the method of doubt. By his deliberate doubt he began to doubt everything. For this purpose he had suitably freed his mind for all cares, and had secured for himself an assured leisure in peaceful solitude and at last begun to apply himself earnestly and freely to the general overthrow of all his former opinions. Here Descartes doubts everything not because those were false but because nothing can be supposed to be true unless they are proved to be clear and distinct.

In meditation-I Descartes made the sense perceptions the first victim of his universal doubt. For him, our sense perceptions are doubtful because they often deceive us and "illusion and hallucination etc." are good examples of it. It seems certain that - "I am in this place,
seated by the fire, attired in a dressing-gown having this paper in my hands and ..." (Meditation-I, AT-VII, P-19). But these certainties are doubtful because an insane or mentally disturbed person may persist in assuring us that they are kings, when in fact they are in extreme poverty. According to Descartes, we are men and we are in the habit of sleeping, and what the insane represent to themselves in these waking moments we represent ourselves, with other things even less probable, in our dreams. So, what we are taking to be certain, i.e. my present state of being here etc., are actually doubtful and not certain. For, there is no certain marks distinguishing waking from sleep.

Descartes made various sciences including mathematics the second victim of his deliberate doubt because the truths of science can be questioned. It may be that all powerful God may arrange the things in a way that what we are proving to be universal truth of science, are not in that manner and actually God is deceiving us. Descartes was aware that there are many people who do not believe in God. So, he maintained that there might be a demon who tricks us to believe in falsehood. Thus scientific truths are not certain or they are doubtful.

In meditation-II, Descartes tried to find out which is certain and indubitable, or to know certainly that in the world there is nothing certain. He compares himself with Archimedes who was in search of a point, fixed and immovable, to serve in liver age so that he might displace the earth. Likewise, Descartes needs some one thing that is
certain and indubitable so that he would be entitled to entertain high hopes. Here Descartes realized that only deliberate doubt could be able to reach him in a state of certainty and indubitable. So, he moved further and found that everything can be doubted. His body, sensing or his action, and so called certain things of the world are not indubitable.

Descartes found that by denying his senses, body and mind he seems to deny himself or his existence. Actually, by doubting his mind, senses, body etc. he can not deny his existence. For he persuaded himself of something, or merely he thought of something, he must exist. So far as he is doubting, or thinking of something he must exist. Here he discovered that his existence is certain and indubitable. Thus his famous proposition "I think, therefore I exist" or 'Cogito-ergo-sum' is discovered. He found that this is the most certain proposition. His existence is beyond doubt.

Just after having certain that he exists, Descartes inquired what he is "I am certain that I exist, but who am I that exist?" It is not his body, nor animality, nor God. But it is something which thinks. He is a thing which thinks, "... to speak accurately I am not more than a thing which thinks, that is to say a mind or a soul, or an understanding or a reason, which are terms whose significance was formerly unknown to me. I am however, a real thing and really exist; but what thing? I have answered: a thing which thinks."² Thus Descartes discovered that he is a thinking thing and it is certain and indubitable. For, to doubt is to
think and when we doubt something than we think that something is dubitable.

According to Descartes, "thinking is nothing other than "consciousness". In his meditation-II, he made it clear that he is nothing but a thinking thing and a thinking thing is that which is having conscious activities like doubting, understanding, willing, sensing etc; that is, consciousness. As he says, "what then is it that I am? A thinking thing, what is a thinking thing? It is a thing that doubts, understands, affirms, denies, wills, abstains from willing, that also can be aware of images and sensations."³

Descartes uses the word "thinking" to mean "being conscious" and hence 'thought' for him is nothing other than consciousness. It is not awareness of animals, nor a state of simple awareness. Consciousness is self sufficient. Consciousness is entirely immanent and capable of living its life independently of the body. Descartes clearly shows that only consciousness or thinking is certain. Since he is primarily conscious of his own consciousness, the knowledge of the subject is nothing else than the knowledge of consciousness.

According to Descartes, consciousness or thinking is his essence for as long as he thinks, and only when he thinks, it is certain that he exists. We are aware of every thought we have. Being aware of myself would be a particular example of thinking. Therefore, if I am aware of myself I am aware of thinking. It means that in self-
consciousness we are conscious of being conscious. The term "Consciousness" is equal to thought in Descartes. "By the term thought I understand all those things which, we being conscious occur in us, in so far as the consciousness of them is in us. So not only understanding, willing and imagining, but also sensing, are the same thing here as thinking (AT-VII-1, 7-8, 1X-28; HR - I, 122)." Descartes' definition of the term 'thought' is clear in his "Demonstration" in geometrical fashion where he says,

"Thought is a word that covers everything that exists in us in such a way that we are immediately conscious of it. Thus all the operations of will, intellect, imagination, and of the senses are thoughts. But I have added immediately, for the purpose of excluding that which is a consequence of our thought; for example, voluntary movement, which, though indeed depend on thought as on a casual principle, is yet itself not thought."4

Descartes maintains that being conscious is indeed thinking and reflecting on one's thought. Consciousness is reflective thought, not the thought itself. Consciousness can be contemporary with the thought which is its subject. Man is conscious of anything which is in him. "I can affirm with certainty there is nothing in me, of which I am not in any way conscious (AT-VII, 107; HR - II, 13)." Consciousness is the connecting together of a present experience with my past experience into a kind of coherence story. Descartes declares that as the mind is a thinking
thing or conscious thing what is in the mind we are conscious about it. Nothing can exist in the mind which is not thought. For him, the statement "that nothing can exist in the mind, in so far as it is a thinking thing, of which it is not conscious" is self-evident. It is because we conceive nothing to exist in it, that is not thought, and something dependent on thought. There can exist in us no thought of which, at the very moment that it is present in us, we are not conscious. In other words, we are conscious of our consciousness or thought which is in us. The consciousness of our own thought is the basic. Consciousness reflects its own certainty. Nothing is needed to prove its existence in the mind. When any thought is present in us we become conscious of it. It is because the mind is a thinking thing. Thus Descartes says, "the fact that nothing can exist in the mind, in so far as it is a thinking thing, of which it is not conscious, seems to me self-evident, because we conceive nothing to exist in it, viewed in this light, that is not thought, and something dependent on thought; for otherwise it would not belong to the mind, in so far as it is a thinking thing."5

According to Descartes, we are always conscious of all the acts and operations of the mind. In other words, no mental acts or operations can exist in the mind of which we are not conscious. The faculty which is in us is actually realized only when it is exercised. As soon as we exercise any faculty of the mind we become conscious of it. So, if we can not form consciousness of any faculty we can not accept
that it exists in our mind. Thus Descartes writes, "But it has to be noted that, while indeed we are always in actuality conscious of acts or operations of the mind, that is not the case with the faculties or powers of mind, except potentially. So that when we dispose ourselves to the exercise of any faculty, if the faculty reside in us, we are immediately actually conscious of it; and hence we can deny that it exists in the mind, if we can form no consciousness of it."\(^6\)

The entity which has consciousness is the subject of consciousness. For Descartes, the mind is the subject of consciousness or thinking, for the mind is a thinking thing. When the mind is regarded as the subject of thinking or consciousness, here the thinking includes all phenomena that can be called the mental. It is already mentioned that after being certain that he exists (Cogito-ergo-sum), Descartes tried to find out what he is and he found that he is nothing but a thinking thing. Thinking or consciousness is his essence or nature. For him, nothing without which a thing can still exist is comprised in its essence. The essence of a thing contains only what is necessary for the existence of the thing. Our mind exists only as a thinking thing and therefore thinking or consciousness is his essence. As Descartes says, "...I know that nothing belongs to my essence (i.e. to the essence of the mind alone) beyond the fact that I am a thinking thing, it follows that in actual truth nothing else thus belong to it."\(^7\)
It is to be noted that the mind is the thinking thing and thinking or consciousness is its essence, and nothing else exist in it except consciousness or thought. Consciousness is not a quality or attribute of the mind for the additional attributes of the mind do not belong to essence of the mind. As Descartes remarks, "For in my opinion nothing without which a thing can still exist is comprised in its essence, and although mind belongs to the essence of man, to be united to a human body is in the proper sense no part of the essence of mind."\(^8\)

From the scrutiny of his nature or essence Descartes found that his essence is thinking or consciousness. For, he is aware of himself when and only when he is aware of thinking. He has a clear and distinct perception of himself as solely as a thinking thing. Descartes hold that the mind is the only subject of consciousness or thinking for it is the essence of mind. Being the subject of consciousness the mind is distinct from the body. It is distinct as an un-extended and conscious thing. His position becomes clearer when he declares that the whole nature of the mind is consciousness. He remarks thus, "...Simply from knowing that I exist, and that, mean time. I do not observe any other thing as evidently pertaining to my nature; i.e., my essence, except this only, that I am a thinking thing, I rightly conclude that my essence consists in this alone, that I am thinking thing (i.e. a substance, the whole nature or essence of which consists in thinking)"\(^9\)
Descartes regards the mind to be a substance and a substance which is the subject of consciousness or thinking. A substance is that whose existence is implied by its essence or nature. In "Demonstration" in geometrical fashion Descartes defines a substance as "Everything in which there resides immediately, as in a subject, or by means of which there exist anything that we perceive, i.e., any property, quality, or attribute of which we have real idea is called substance." For him, we do not have any idea of a substance itself than that it is a thing in which this something that we perceive or which is present objectively in some of our ideas, exists formally or eminently. It is because we know that a real attribute can not be an attribute of nothing. So far as the mind is the subject of thinking or consciousness it is a thinking or conscious substance. Descartes prefers the word "mind" to represent the thinking substance rather than the word "spirit". He finds that "spirit" is an equivocal word and it is frequently used to represent a corporeal thing. So he says, "That substance in which thought immediately resides, I call mind. I use the term "mind" here rather than "spirit", as "spirit" is equivocal and is frequently applied to what is corporeal".

Descartes clarifies that human mind is only spiritual substance, the thinking thing, the conscious substance. The whole nature or essence of the spiritual substance is thinking. Further he asserts that thought or consciousness is only in the mind. It immediately resides only in the mind for it is a thinking or conscious substance. As he says,"
The human mind is that where in the processes of thought are accomplished by man; and it consists of the faculty of thinking alone, and the inward principle.\textsuperscript{12} Descartes has no doubt about the fact that thinking or consciousness is sufficient for the existence of the mind. In other words mind can be showed to be different from other corporeal things of the world only because, it is a conscious substance or thinking thing, here thinking or consciousness is the differentiating faculty of the mind. It is consciousness which make the mind to be mind and differentiates the mind from all the things in the world around us. Nothing is needed except thinking or consciousness for mind to accomplish its processes. Thus Descartes remarks: "The mind has no need of innate ideas, or notions, or axioms, but of itself the faculty of thinking suffices for the accomplishment of its processes\textsuperscript{13}.

It is, therefore, free of doubt that the mind is the subject of consciousness or thinking. Nothing in this world can be said to be the subject of consciousness or thinking except the mind for it is the thinking thing. Descartes denies the body to be the subject of consciousness or thinking, because it is extended and unthinking substance. For him, there is no thinking apart from something which thinks. So, mind is that thing which thinks and that thing is a substance vastly different from and independent of the great space-time mechanical world of physics. The mental substance mind is totally different from the corporeal substance "body"
and the infinite substance God. Further, he tried to localize the mind or soul as the subject of consciousness. In "the passions of the soul", Descartes describes at the thinking subject sits in the pineal gland of the brain and controls its activities. Here he makes the following statements regarding the mind or soul and its location:

(1) The mind is united to all the parts of the body and cannot be said to exist in any one to the exclusion of others (Part I, article-30);

(2) It exercises its functions immediately only in the pineal gland, for it is the only single organ which for example can unify the two figures formed by two eyes into one coherent picture. (Part -I, article-31)

(3) It radiates throughout the body from the pineal gland by means of the animal spirit. (Part -I, article-34)

Descartes made a survey of the human body so that he can find out actually from where the conscious mind controls his actions and found that the pineal gland is the seat of the mind or soul. For him, the heart or the whole brain can not be the seat of the mind for, the soul can immediately exercise its functions only though the pineal gland of the brain.

According to Descartes, the mind is having consciousness and the body is extended and unconscious or unthinking thing.
Consciousness and body are independent. The body is divisible while mind or consciousness is indivisible. Moreover, mind or consciousness is having no parts, it is a single thing. On the other hand, body is having parts and therefore divisible. As Descartes observes:

"When I consider the mind, that is to say, myself in so far only as I am a thinking thing, I can distinguish in myself no parts; I apprehend myself to be a thing single and entire. Although the mind may seem to be united to the whole body, yet if a foot, an arm, or any other parts of the body, is cut off, I know that my mind is not there by diminished ... The opposite holds in respect of a corporeal, i.e., of an extended thing. I can not think of its save as readily divisible into parts, and therefore recognized it as being divisible."\(^{14}\)

Descartes asserts that we can conceive of the body by dividing it in to different parts. My hands, my head, my fingers etc. can be known as the parts of the body and therefore body is always divisible. On the other hand, the conscious mind can not be understood as divisible. It is because we can not divide the mind in to different parts. Mind is the indivisible whole, a substance which is the subject of consciousness or thinking. Hence by nature the mind is different from the body. It is diverse from the dispositions of the body.

It is to be noted that mind or consciousness can not arise from the body for, the very nature of mind and consciousness is diverse from the body. We can not conceive of the mind and consciousness to
be arisen from the disposition of the body. Descartes firmly declares that "As mind is of a nature diverse from body, and from the disposition of body; and can not arise from this disposition, therefore, it is incorruptible."\textsuperscript{15}

According to Descartes, mind and body are really distinct from each other for, they can exist apart from the other. As he says, "Two substances are said to be really distinct, when each of them can exist apart from the other."\textsuperscript{16} So far as mind and body are independent substances they must exist apart from each other. If we consider the body we find that a body can exist without mind or consciousness. Stones, fire-woods, irons etc. are better examples of bodies which can exist without mind or consciousness. Even a stone can affect our minds for, it arises thoughts in our minds about its shape, hardness etc. Then a question arises whether mind or consciousness can exist without a body? Descartes is confirmed about the fact that mind can exist without the body. For him, mind is, no doubt, conjoined with the body but it can exist without the body. It is because mind is truly distinct from the body for its nature or essence does not include the body and its dispositions. In meditation-VI, Descartes writes:

"And although possibly (or rather certainly; as I shall shortly be declaring) I have a body with which I am very closely conjoined, yet since on the one hand I have a clear and distinct idea of myself, in so far as I am only a thinking un extended thing, and on the other hand a
distinct idea of the body, in so far as it is only an extended unthinking thing, it is certain that I am truly distinct from my body, and can exist without it. Thus Descartes believes that mind can exist without the body which implies that there may be disembodied survival of mind and consciousness. Mind or consciousness can survive after the destruction of the physical body. Hence, the mind or soul is immortal. Descartes tried to convince that mind is having consciousness and it is diverse from the body and its nature shows that it can exist even without the body. In other words, to understand the existence of mind we need not the help of physical body. Descartes says that perhaps God may arrange the mind in a peculiar way where mind's nature seems to be very different from the body and can exist without it. In the "Discourse on the method" Descartes declares that by nature the mind or consciousness can not die with the death of the physical body and therefore the mind or soul can be said to be immortal. As he says, "As a matter of fact, when one comes to know how greatly they differ, we understand much better the reasons which go prove that our soul is in its nature entirely independent of body, and in consequence that it is not liable to die with it. And then, in as much as we observe no other causes capable of destroying it, we naturally inclined to judge that it is immortal."
Although the mind is very different from the body and can exist without it, yet mind is closely related to the body. For him, mind is not a pilot in the ship but intimately conjoined to make a unitary whole. Thus we do not say that I am a body and a soul, but we refer to ourselves merely as a human being. In his meditation-VI, Descartes express his view rather clearly thus: "Nature also teaches me by this sensing of pain, hunger, thirst, etc., that I am not lodged in my body merely as a pilot in a ship, but so intimately conjoined, and as it were intermingled with it, that with it I form a unitary whole".  

Descartes is in the opinion that the rational soul, the mind, can not be in any way derived from the power of matter, but it must be expressly created. It is true that the mind should be lodged in the human body like a pilot in his ship so that it can move its members. But it is necessary that the mind or soul should also be joined and united more closely to the body in order to have sensation and appetites similar to our own, and thus form a true man. It is because of this intimate relation of mind and the body we often forget that we are distinct from the body for, we say “Brutas killed Caeser” not that “Brutas killed Caeser’s body.”

Descartes is aware of the fact that the relation between consciousness and body would not be completed if it is not showed how the mind acts upon the body to cause an action. For him, mind and body interact i.e., mental events can sometimes cause bodily
events and bodily can sometimes causes mental events. He maintains that in man mind and body form a single system of mutually interacting components. In his, "The passions of the soul", Descartes expresses how mind or soul acts upon the body. As he says, "The action of the soul consists in this that, simply by willing it, makes the small gland, to which it is closely united, move in a way requisite for proving the effect aimed in the volition."20 (Part-I, article-41)

According to Descartes, mind or soul sits in the pineal gland of the brain and acts upon the animal spirit to cause an action for; mind is closely united to the pineal gland. In the article-43 of the "passion", Descartes explains that " When we desire to imagine something we have never seen, this desire has the power of causing the gland to move it in the manner requisite to drive the spirits towards the pores of the brain by the opening of which pores this particular thing may be represented; thus when we wish to apply our attention for some time to the consideration of one particular object, this desire holds the gland for the time being inclined to the same side. Thus, finally, when we desire to walk or to move our body in some special way, this desire causes the gland to thrust the spirits towards the muscles which serve to bring this result."21 It is a familiar fact that if we think that it is too dark to read we go to switch on the light and here our mind acts upon the body. In other words, mental phenomena act upon the body. Like wise, physical phenomena acts upon the mind i.e., a physical injury on the
foot or in any parts of the body causes pain in the mind. This is expressed in the "passions", Part-I, Article-34. Hence, the interaction between the body and the mind can be explained simply as—mind reacts upon the body and the body reacts upon the mind or consciousness. This theory is known as interactionism. According to Descartes, only brain can immediately affect the mind and on the other hand, mind affect the body only through the brain. In his Meditation—VI, he writes: "I take note that the mind is immediately affected, not by all parts of the body, but only by the brain, or rather perhaps only by one small part of it, viz, by that part in which the sensus communis is said to be. This part, as often as it is affected in the same way, exhibits always one and the same impression to the mind, although the other parts of the body may meantime have become otherwise disposed, as is proved by innumerable experiences on which there is no need to dwell." Descartes explained the mechanical presence of the body on the mind by the mediating service of the animal spirits terminating in the pineal gland of the brain. He also shows that the mind acts upon the body by moving the animal spirits in the pineal gland of the brain which coursing through muscles leads to bodily movement.

Descartes' concept of consciousness is completely different from animal awareness. For him, thinking is entitled to the thinking thing only. In other words, only human mind is having consciousness or thought. He indicates that it is consciousness which makes us human
beings different from other animals. No animal is entitled to have the thinking capacity. According to Descartes, God has created man as a thinking, conscious substance and animals with their simple awareness. For him, in a sense the animals are moving machines or automata. But animals are machines of a different type which are better than the machines which are made by human beings. Because, animals are made by the hands of God, animal awareness is not thinking or consciousness.

In his "Discourse on the method", Descartes clearly shows that man can made so many moving machines or automata. He regards the human body to be a machine for its essence is extension. Like the body, the moving machines or animals lack consciousness. He believe that man made machines are not equal to God made animals. For him animals do not have consciousness or thought but they are better arranged than that of the man made machines. As he says, "...this will not seem strange to those who know how many different automata or moving machines can be made by the industry of man, without employing in so doing more than a very few parts in comparison with the great multitude of bones, muscles, nerves, arteries, veins, or other parts that are found in the body of each animal....s...animals which, having been made by the hands of God, is incomparably better arranged and possesses in itself movements which are much more admirable than any of those which can be invented by man."23
Descartes regarded the animals as automata because they lack consciousness or thought. He finds two basic differences between a man and an animal (automata). Firstly, animal can not use speech or other signs like human beings and they can not reply appropriately to the things that may be said in its presence. Only a conscious mind can use speech or other signs to reply to what are said to him. In Descartes' words, ".....they could never used speech or other signs as we do when placing our thoughts on record for the benefit of others.....it never happens that it arranges its speech in various ways, in order to reply appropriately to everything that may be said in its presence, as even the lowest type of man can do."\(^{24}\)

Secondly, animal do not act from their knowledge but they act according to the dispositions of their organs. Only conscious mind can act according to their knowledge. Hence, animal awareness is just the dispositions of their bodies. As Descartes says, ".....although machines can perform certain things as well as or perhaps better than any of us can do, they infallibly fall short in others, by which means we may discover that they did not act of knowledge, but only from the dispositions of their organs."\(^{25}\)

Moreover, Descartes shows that if the animals have consciousness they must try to communicate with us but they do not. It is because they do not have mind or consciousness. For him, men who, being born deaf and dumb, are in the same degree, or even more than
the brutes. They do not possess the organs which serve other humans for talking. Yet they are able to communicate with other human beings and by inventing various signs they talk to us. What is required to talk is the thinking or consciousness or mind. The brutes do not try to talk and they can not talk like us for, they have no mind or consciousness at all. The brutes have natural movements which betray passions. They have no reasons and nature acts in them according to the dispositions of their organs.

Descartes' conception of consciousness discloses the fact that thinking or consciousness is the essence of the mind. It is what makes the mind to be mind for it is a thinking thing. It is consciousness which makes the mind or soul to be basically different from its body which is the corporeal substance. God has created the man as such that he can not but live as a thinking thing and totally different from extended corporeal thing. Since body is not thinking thing consciousness can exist without the body. Although mind or consciousness is different from the body, yet it is closely united with it. Mind sits in the pineal gland of the brain and acts upon the body. There is an interaction between mind and the body. Actually, Descartes left little to discuss about the human intellect and reason. What makes human beings superior than that of other creatures of the world is his thinking or reasoning or consciousness. Descartes was aware of the fact that thinking thing or the mind is the substance which is the only thing
having consciousness and it can be proved by the method of doubt. Hence it is clear and distinct that the existence of the thinking mind is certain and this consciousness is the essence of mind which is very different from animal awareness.

Since the first publication of Descartes' philosophical works philosophers of caliber have made enough discussions analyzing his concepts and it is impossible to mention all of those views here. Yet, it is hereby tried to account some of the views which, attract the attention and which, are about Descartes' concept of consciousness are thinking or mind. So far as Descartes' philosophy is based on his most certain and indubitable proposition "Cogito, ergo sum" philosophers tried to find out various meanings and implication of the principle by analyzing it from different angles.

Jaakko Hintikka, in his famous article "cogito, ergo sum: Inference or performance?" tried to analyze Descartes' "Cogito, ergo sum" as a performance. According to him, Descartes' dictum "Cogito, ergo sum" is not a logical inference although it seems to be. In "I think, therefore I exist" we often confuse that "I exist" is derived from "I think" like a syllogistic inference. Although Descartes himself denied it to be a syllogistic inference we can show this principle to be an inference and its logical form seems quite easy to define. For him, "In the sentence "I think" an individual receives an attribute; for a modern logician it is therefore of the form \("\exists (\alpha)\). in the sentence "I am or I exist",.
this same individual is said to exist. Here “I exist” can be represented in the formula “(x = α)” where “α exists” and “there exists at least one individual identical with α” are synonymous. Descartes’ argument “I think, therefore I exist” has the form (1) β(α) → (Ex) (x = α). Descartes perceives that he thinks; hence he obtains the premise β(α). If (1) is true, he can use modus ponens to conclude that he exists. Those who want to interpret the cogito as a logical inference may now claim that (1) is in fact true, and even logically provable; for β(α)[(Ex)(x = α & (3x)]. Here Descartes’ argument is thus easily construed as a valid logical inference.

According Hintikka, although it seems that Descartes’ argument could be proved to be valid in (1) but it is a fruitless job. For, “it may be shown that the provability of (1) in the usual systems of functional calculus (quantification theory), has nothing to do with the questions whether thinking entails existence.” Moreover, β(α)[(Ex)(x = α & β(x))] is a general formula where “ambulo, ergo sum” and “cogito ergo sum” both have the same form. But, for Descartes, the premise in “ambulo, ergo sum” is not indubitable while the premise of “Cogito ergo sum” is certain and indubitable. Hence, the “Cogito, ergo sum” is not a logical inference at all. Actually, the validity of the argument depends essentially on existential presuppositions.

Hintikka points out that Descartes’ non existence is inconsistent with his action of uttering the sentence. “Descartes’ formulations in the
meditations and elsewhere suggest that his result may be expressed by saying that it was impossible for him to deny his existence." To assert the statement "Descartes does not exist" by Descartes himself is existentially inconsistent.\textsuperscript{30} Hintikka defines the notion of existential inconsistency as -let "P" be a sentence and \( \alpha \) a singular term (e.g., a name, a pronoun, or a definite description). We shall say that \( P \) is existentially inconsistent, for the person referred to by \( \alpha \) utter it and only if the longer sentence "\( P \); and \( \alpha \) exist" is inconsistent (in the ordinary sense of the word ).\textsuperscript{31} According to Hintikka, what makes the sentence existentially inconsistent or self-defeating is that the person referred to there in himself utters it. It is the utterance by the person concerned, his "performance" of that act which brings in the inconsistency. As he says, "the inconsistency (absurdity) of an existentially inconsistent statement can in a sense be said to be of performatory (performative) character. It depends on an act or "performance", namely, on a certain person's act of uttering a sentence.\textsuperscript{32} It is a normal fact that a speaker wants his hearer to believe what he says. But if the speaker tries to convince his hearer that he does not exist by telling him so, his attempt is likely to have opposite result. Hence, pointlessness of existentially inconsistent statements is due to the fact that they automatically destroy the major purpose of uttering a statement.\textsuperscript{33} It is absured to deny my own existence by uttering the self defeating statement "I do not
exist". Existentially inconsistent sentences defeat themselves when they are uttered or thought of and their negations verify themselves when they are expressly uttered or otherwise professed. In other words, they are self-verifying. Hintikka says that Descartes realized the existential inconsistency of the sentence "I do not exist" and therefore the existential self-verifiability of "I exist". "Cogito, ergo sum" is the single possible way of expressing Descartes' insight.\textsuperscript{34}

According to Hintikka, Descartes had to reconcile that the essence of a human being consists entirely of thinking and the obvious fact that there are genuine acts of consciousness other than those of thinking. These acts of consciousness include willing, feeling etc. For him, Descartes tried to interpret all the other acts of consciousness as so many modes of thinking.\textsuperscript{35} For Descartes, a mental activity was a part of his nature if and only if the corresponding verb functions as the premise of a variant of the cogito argument.

In his famous article "Descartes's proof that his essence is thinking" Norman Malcolm analyses how Descartes established the fact that thinking or consciousness is the essence of mind. According to Malcolm, Descartes proved by his "cogito, ergo sum" that his existence is certain and indubitable, but "it is more difficult to understand how he moves from the thesis that since he thinks therefore his existence is certain, to the thesis that his existence is certain, to the thesis that his nature is nothing but thinking and he is
entirely distinct from body” 36 Malcolm proposes that Descartes’s doctrine that his essential nature is thinking is based on a line of thought, not explicitly stated but suggested in various passage, which does have an expressive appearance of cogency. For him, if we attribute this line of thought to Descartes we shall find it easily intelligible that the lucid philosopher should have drawn the conclusion that he was “a substance the whole essence or nature of which is to think.” 37

According to Malcolm, after being certain of his existence Descartes tried to find out what he is and here he tried to discover his essence or nature. Descartes was searching for that which ‘pertains’ to him or “can not be separated” from him. But Descartes does not explicitly define the terms “essence” or “nature” and he only says that nothing without which a thing can still exist is comprised in its essence. Here a question arises “does the essence of a thing contain everything that is necessary for the existence of the thing?” This question is unanswered by Descartes. It is said that only the essences of God contain everything that is necessary for the existence God.38

In order to determine the essence of mind we need a criterion which was not clearly indicated by Desecrates. In this regard, Malcolm’s suggestion is that Descartes employed the following principle as a criterion to determine his essential nature:
G. X is my essence if it is the case that I am aware of x then (necessarily) I am aware of myself and if I am aware of myself then (necessarily) I am aware of x.

Malcolm takes the liberty of treating the phrases "aware of myself", aware of my existence", and "aware that I exist" as equivalent in principle G. For him there are two conditions of the principle G.

(a) The first condition is "If I am aware of thinking I am aware of myself." Malcolm believes that "Descartes would agree that if I am aware of thinking then I am thinking and (by assumption) that if I am thinking I am aware of myself. If follows that if I am aware of thinking I am aware of myself." 39

(b) The second condition is "If I am aware of myself I am aware of thinking." Malcolm says that this particular condition of principle G holds for thinking. For, Descartes maintains that we are aware of every thought we have and being aware of myself would be a particular example of thinking. Hence it is clear that if I am aware of myself I am aware of thinking. Since "thinking" satisfies both the conditions of principle G it can be said that thinking is my essence. In other words, thinking is the essence of mind or myself.40

According to Malcolm, although the method of proving the doctrine sum res cogitans was not explicitly formulated by Descartes yet this line of thought helps us to understand his passage in Meditation VI: "Just because I know certainly that I exist, and that
meanwhile I do not notice (animadvert am) that any other thing necessarily pertains to my nature or essence, excepting that I am a thinking thing, I rightly conclude that my essence consists solely in the fact that I am a thinking thing (AT VII, 78, H R I, 190)." 41

It is a fact that my body cannot satisfy both the conditions of principle G which is satisfied by thinking. Desecrates can be aware of himself even if he is not aware of anything corporeal. Here, Descartes is apparently entitled to hold that he is "entirely and absolutely distinct" from his body Malcolm points out that although thinking satisfy both the conditions (a) and (b) we cannot establish that my essence is thinking. For, the two conditions (a) and (b) are true solely because their denial or negation is self defeating. Moreover, the doctrine that one cannot think without being aware of thinking could be justified by the self-defeating nature of the statement "I am not aware of thinking". In Descartes's broad sense of "thinking" the statements "I am not thinking" and "I do not exist both are self-defeating. Thus the metaphysical thesis sum res cogitans obtains its entire support from the self defeating nature of the negation of the two conditions (a) and (b) in the principle G Malcolm believes that this line of thought may help in understanding why Descartes regarded the cogito as being so fruitful. "For the logical truth that underlies the cogito, together with another of exactly the same character, could seem to Descartes to
provide an immediate transition from the cogito to the important theme that his nature is solely thinking.”

According to Malcolm, Descartes states three proofs of the thesis that I am only a thinking and un-extended thing. The first proof is the argument from doubt which can be asserted as follows:

I can doubt that my body exists,
I cannot doubt that I exist,
Therefore, my body does not pertain to my nature.

This first proof is invalid for, the same form of argument could be applied to refute the argument from doubt. For Malcolm, if it were valid to argue “I can doubt that my body exists but not that I exist, ergo I am not my body”, it would be equally valid to argue “I can doubt that there exists a being whose essential nature is to thinking, but I cannot doubt that I exist, ergo I am not a being whose essential nature is to think.”

The second proof is the argument from clear and distinct ideas which can be expressed as: “I have a clear and distinct idea of myself as thinking and un-extended thing and of body as an extended and unthinking thing; therefore I am separate and distinct from body.” Malcolm points out that this argument requires support for the premise that I have a clear and distinct idea of myself as thinking and un-extended thing. But Descartes did not provide support for the premise and therefore this argument becomes invalid.
The third proof is the argument from the indivisibility of myself which is asserted as: "I am indivisible but my body is divisible, therefore my body does not pertain to my essence. Malcolm says that this argument also requires support for the premise I am indivisible. It, is because I not only refers to mind but also to body hence I am divisible in this sense. If Descartes has to establish that "I am solely a thinking and un extended thing" he has to depend upon the principle G which itself is not proved to be a logical truth for it depends upon self-defeating character of the negations of the conditions (a) and (b). 45

Norman Malcolm attributed one more argument to Descartes which is suggested by various passages of Descartes. For him, this argument appears to provide a complete demonstration of the doctrine sum-res-cogitans, and to give the needed support to the second and third arguments. This new arguments, as he says, is an appearance of extreme rigor and cogency but it is actually invalid for, its solidity and power is derived from the cogito itself which is only a performance.

In an article entitled “Concepts of Consciousness in Aristotle”, W.F.R. Hardie explains Descartes' concept of consciousness as a reflexive consciousness. For him, Descartes' use of conscientia is different from the general use of "Consciousness" 46. He marks the general use of the word "Consciousness" as "Consciousness," which is the name given to a property deemed to be possessed by animals including man but probably not by plants and certainly not by stones.
On other hand, in Descartes view we are not immediately conscious of the bodily movements caused by a mental act of willing but there can exist no thought of which, at the very moment that it is present in us, we are not conscious (AT - VII, 246; HR -II,-115). Moreover, we cannot but be conscious of our own occurrent cogitative states and activities at the moment of their occurrence in us. Consciousness reflects its own states and hence Descartes use of consciousness can be represented as Consciousness.

Hardie illustrates five basic points how Descartes used conscientia and conscious as follows:

1. To be conscious is to know something reflexively as in Latin phrases which include a reflexive pronoun, e.g., conscious to oneself (sibi) of one's own rectitude or fault. (2) Thus Descartes' use is closer to an original use than the use simply to refer to consciousness. (3) Descartes' elucidations suggest that his conscientia is reflexive (or reflective) in a psychological or epistemological (as well as grammatical) sense: we are conscious or aware of our own cogitations. (4) These facts about Descartes' terminology make it convenient provisionally to use "consciousness," for his reflexive consciousness. (5) If Descartes is right, any act of consciousness must be accompanied by, or contain as an element or aspect, consciousness: Consciousness is always consciousness.
According to Hardie, Descartes knows that his principle, that we are necessarily conscious of our cogitations, was difficult and liable to be misunderstood. Thus in the passions of the Soul Descartes explains that, While willing something is an action, our cognizing that we will it is a passion: Yet because such cognizing and such volition are really one and the same thing, it is always named from what is the more noble and accordingly it is not customary to call it a passion but always to view it as an action. For him, Descartes' cogitatio and conscientia are not 'synonyms' but they are co-extensive descriptions. Hardie points out that we may be led to entertain the possibility of a stage at which consciousness has departed but not yet consciousness or at which consciousness has returned but not yet consciousness. We cannot deny a difference between a minimal and a normal presence of consciousness. So far as non-human animals are allowed to have consciousness they are to be given some account of inner life. Descartes denied that animals have inner lives but he did not ignore the importance and the difficulty of the question. So Descartes suggests that his own opinion is not unkind to brutes but respectful to men since it denies their criminality in killing animals and devouring their flesh. Hardie says that Descartes comes near to conceding that possibly some animals may have some sort of consciousness: he does not deny to animals life or even sense so far as it depends on a bodily organ. We can explain in animals the bodily movements which in
us accompany pain but "not pain strictly speaking". Here Hardie is agree with Descartes that human and non human nature have differences. For him, "...but there is a difference. 'Not pain strictly speaking'. We hope not. Descartes' phrase both suggests concisely a plausible linguistic thesis about 'pain' and expresses a firmly and widely held conviction that normal human sensations and perceptions are very different from the actualizations of sentience and sense in at least many kinds of animals. In the absence of such conviction how could we bring ourselves to approve and enjoy the pleasures of the angler, prevent chickens from ranging freely, boil lobsters or cause beagles to smoke cigarettes?"  

The forgoing pages show that philosophers like Jeekko Hintikka have analysed Descartes' "Cogito, ergo sum" as performance for, Descartes himself denied it to be a syllogistic inference. If we observe the dictum "I think, therefore I exist" it seems to be an inference where "I exist" is derived from "I think". But it cannot be an inference for otherwise it would be a circular argument. Descartes established his existence as a meditator in utmost certainty by this proposition. It is after the establishment of his existence we can get the major premise that "Everything which thinks exists". Hintikka's analysis is acceptable that Descartes realized the self-deafiting character of "I do not exist" and the self verifying character of "I exist" and expressed his insight by the single possible way 'Cogito, ergo sum.' We often observe that
philosophers argue that there was no need to derive 'sum' from 'cogito' and the very word 'I' is sufficient to express his existence for the utterance of the word 'I' signify the existence of the utterer. Here we must remember that Descartes' aim was not to establish his existence but to attain in a certain and indubitable truth where he could lay the solid foundation of philosophy. As a sincere meditator Descartes cannot presuppose his own existence while applying the method of doubt for, he has to free the philosophical thinking from superstitions and presuppositions. Descartes was aware of the necessity of free thinking in philosophy which prevented him from accepting the existence of his "I" at the outset of his enquiry. Hence, Descartes seems to be right in expressing his existence in cogito, ergo sum as a certain and indubitable truth.

The discussion of Descartes' conception of consciousness makes us to believe that his theory of consciousness could be characterized as the first person account. It is because; he discovered consciousness while meditating to attain a certain truth. When he says that he is a thinking thing he refers to his own consciousness which is intuitively known. It seems that he is referring to his private knowledge or private understanding of consciousness. That we need not to depend upon other's activities to understand what consciousness is. That it is intuitively known from our own case because we are conscious. But the difficulty of the first person account is that if we
understand consciousness from our own case we can not apply it to others because it is completely private, inner and known from our own case. We can escape from the difficulty of the privacy by saying that every perception is a private affair in a sense but we do not claim that what I perceive can not be perceived by others. We can assume other people to conscious only by observing their conscious behaviours which are similar to us. Moreover, Descartes' concept of consciousness is not completely private for, it is applicable to any sincere mediator. So, Descartes' account of consciousness can not be kept in the water tight compartment of the first person account. Even if his concept of consciousness is very close to first person account Descartes was right. It is because we can assume the presence of consciousness in others only in comparison with our own. Because when I am conscious my behaviour demonstrates consciousness. We can understand the meaning of the demonstration of consciousness in other's behaviour for; we have known it from our own case.

Descartes' concept of mind or soul as the subject of consciousness is acceptable. Although Hume could not find out the soul we can not deny his existence as a subject or observer or investigator of the mind or soul. We must admit the existence of the subject who doubts, imagines, thinks etc. and whose existence is certain in the cogito, ergo sum. On the other hand, physical body can not be the subject of consciousness. It is because the essential nature
of body is extension. One who does not find the mind in his introspective awareness is either pretending to be so or fails to realize himself or fails to follow the way indicated by Descartes. Mc Taggart says that our knowledge of our identity implies that self is not a mere bundle of impressions as Hume contended. It implies there is in fact an analyzable ego of which we have direct knowledge in introspection. Descartes’ view of the mind as the subject of consciousness is acceptable for; we can not keep mind or consciousness in the status of material body. But we must admit that the subject of consciousness includes some references to material bodies. It is because mind is always accompanied with a body.

Descartes’ localization of the mind or soul in the pineal gland of the brain seems to be incorrect. According to Wilder Penfield, to suppose that consciousness or mind has localization is a failure to understand neurophysiology. But Descartes was very close to that part of the brain in which the essential circuits of the highest brain mechanism must be active to make consciousness possible. But Descartes was very close to that part of the brain in which the essential circuits of the highest brain mechanism must be active to make consciousness possible. Penfield believes that mind is created by the highest brain mechanism. For him, somehow electricity is like the mind in the sense that one can not assign to mind a position in space and yet it is easy to see what it does and where it does it. Here we must admit that Descartes was not in an error of philosophical matter while localizing mind in the pineal gland. H.D. Lewis maintains that Descartes was not in error on a philosophical
matter or seriously confused philosophically in what he had to say about the pineal gland. He was simply informed about physiological matters, and that was not surprising when systematic study of the body was still in its infancy, Descartes himself helping much to stimulate it.\textsuperscript{51}

Hence, Descartes' view that the soul or conscious mind sit in the brain is acceptable for, brain is the vastly complicated master organ within the body that makes thought and consciousness possible. The recent neurosurgical experience makes clear that injury or interference with function in the higher brain stem would abolish consciousness completely. It shows that Descartes' view was correct in a modified form.

The relation between consciousness and the physical body is carefully explained in Descartes' philosophy of mind and it has a far reaching influence on modern philosophers. Descartes' mind-body interactionism is vehemently criticized by philosophers. The argument against interactionism is that if mind acts on the body or vice-versa energy must flow in and out of the material or mental spheres, which will thus cease to be conservative systems. But it seems that this argument against interactionism is invalid. Because the principle of the conservation of energy merely asserts that if a change occurs, energy passes from one place to another within the conservative system. It does not assert that energy must always pass from cause to effect. A conservative system is one in which energy remains constant though it
may be differently distributed. Hence, interaction between mind and body does not go against the principle of the conservation of energy. Moreover, in the history of philosophy we repeatedly come across the statement that mind and body can not interact because the two are very different from each other. But it seems that it is not appropriate to describe it as an argument against interactionism. The mind-body interaction is no more inconceivable than is the fact that two bodies attract each other according to the law of the inverse square.\textsuperscript{52}

It is a fact that mental events act upon the physical events and vice-versa. We can not accept that the pyramids and the Empire State Building were erected without the aid of a single thought and that the greatest works of art were created without the effect of a single feeling. On the other hand, any physical injury to our body is enough to cause a mental pain. It is true that we can not demonstrate mental actions in a laboratory and show how they act upon body. But mere inability to demonstrate does not imply that the interactionism is incorrect. Moreover, the investigator of mind or consciousness must be the lover of mind at first and, in real sense; Descartes was one of the lover of mind who gave much importance on mind, the thinking thing. Whether he was absolutely correct in expressing interactionism or not, we can not say at this moment. But all we can say, as Lewis points out, is that the state of our mind influences our bodies in certain ways, and that the state of my body affects my mind. Why this should happen we do not
know, it may well be that we shall never know or that there is nothing to know, that these determinations are ultimate in the nature of things - at least for finite understanding.  

Descartes did not try to establish the disembodied existence of consciousness. He only said that consciousness or mind exist without the body. Here, Descartes' point is that since body is not an essential nature of the mind it can exist without it. It is logically possible to maintain the disembodied existence of the mind or consciousness. But it is difficult to demonstrate the disembodied existence of consciousness in a laboratory for, consciousness is not a physical thing. Although Descartes has not proved the existence of consciousness or mind after the destruction of the physical body parapsychology is working in this field. Mental telepathy, psycho kinesis etc. are trying to establish facts about disembodied existence of mind and consciousness. But parapsychology together with messages from departed souls and forecast dreams are in a stage of infancy like modern neurophysiology. We have to wait for future development in this field. Hence, the disembodied survival of soul or consciousness is only a logical possibility.

Descartes' conception of consciousness can not be regarded as a brain process because the brain processes are physical whereas consciousness is purely mental. In recent times neurology has given importance in studying the concept of consciousness as a
neurophysiological phenomena and is trying to identify consciousness with high level brain activity. But neurophysiology is yet to develop itself to prove mental phenomena to be neuronal phenomena. It is fact that consciousness can not be identical with physical process or brain process. As a science, neurophysiology can not demonstrate how a mental phenomena acts upon the physical body in a laboratory. Neurophysiology, as the term suggests, should be satisfied with the neurophysiological enquiry of the brain mechanism. It can never solve a metaphysical problem like the problem of mind or consciousness. We can only admit that with the help of neurophysiological development of the study of consciousness a metaphysician can try to solve the problem. Finally Descartes' consciousness is the essence or nature of mind or soul. Our discussions show that Descartes has given impetus on the real nature or essence of the mind.

We have seen that just after he had been certain that he exist he enquired what he is and found that he is a conscious or thinking thing. Thinking or consciousness is his nature. It is because of this essential nature, thinking, he is distinct from his body and from the other animal automata. Here we may agree with Descartes that consciousness in special sense which is self revealing, reflexive consciousness can not be attributed to animals. Because the same conscious, reasonable, thoughtful and self conscious animal can not be our non-vegetarian food for, they would be equal to us. Hence we must
admit that such consciousness is absent in animals but we may attribute general animal awareness which is much lower grade of consciousness. Secondly, so far as the essence of a body is extension and it is distinct from mind, the body can not be the essence of mind. On the other hand, thinking or consciousness is in separable from mind. In this regard philosophers argue that a good part of human lives passes away without thinking then can we assume that they have no souls? Here it can be said that “thinking” in ordinary sense has a very narrow meaning. In Descartes' view any conscious act is thinking and in this sense every human being must have thoughts. Thirdly, the analysis of Malcolm and Hardie shows that in accepting the consciousness as essence of mind we face some difficulties for the arguments offered for this are really invalid. But we can say that the self-stultifying character of the negation of Cogito gives him the ground to say that consciousness is the essence of mind. For, it is self-stultifying to assert that ‘I don’t exist’ or ‘I don’t think’ or ‘I am not conscious’. Finally, we must admit that only with the help of the essence, consciousness in special sense, we can differentiate man from other animals as well as from material bodies and we can not keep conscious mind in the same status with physical body.
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