

A QUASI-SUBSTANTIAL COMPOSITION VIEW OF MIND-BODY UNION IN DESCARTES

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Presidential Address

This paper will focus on Descartes's thesis, explicit though sometimes unappreciated, that the mind and body are one single thing, an entity *per se*. Everyone knows that Descartes argues for a real or substantial distinction between mind and body, but fewer appreciate that he also maintains the mind and body are actually united and together form one thing, a *per se* entity. As the commentator Henri Gouhier said, "The posthumous history of Cartesianism continues to demonstrate the impotence of Descartes's responses to this subject. The proof of the distinction [between mind and body] was far more successful than the explanation of their union: that much is given" (323). But perhaps there is good reason for confusion. After all, how does Descartes understand the unity of mind and body given that he thinks they are two different substances? Generally, there have been two ways scholars have explained Descartes's thesis that the mind and body are a single entity. In short, the two views are divided on the question of whether the mind-body union is a substantial union or not.

In this paper, I will attempt to split the difference: I will claim that the mind-body union is a quasi-substantial union, or a union in a purely existential, but not essential sense. That is, the mind and body do not form a substance in the genuinely Cartesian sense, but nonetheless form a sort of substance, a genuine unity. I support this thesis by examining Descartes's claim that the mind, body, and mind-body union each constitute a "primitive notion." Though this claim has been frequently discussed, I find in it a new resolution to the question of whether or not the mind and body together form one substance. I argue that primitive notions are ambiguous as to whether they are epistemological or metaphysical primitives. When this is taken into account, we can appreciate that mind-body unions are not metaphysically, but only epistemologically primitive, while minds and bodies are both metaphysically and epistemologically primitive. Moreover, I will show that Descartes considers substances as metaphysical primitives insofar as substance provides an explanatory basis for natural phenomena. As a result, I conclude that Descartes has epistemic reasons to think that the mind and

body form a substantial union, but this union provides no metaphysical basis for the explanation of any natural phenomena and so is not, strictly speaking, a Cartesian substance.¹ Nevertheless, Descartes is clear that the mind and body form a genuine, *per se* unity and so it seems appropriate to give the mind-body union a quasi-substantial status.

MIND-BODY UNION IN DESCARTES

Descartes repeatedly states that the mind and body together compose one thing. He supports this claim primarily by reference to the sensations that result from being embodied. In Meditation 6, after he has proven the existence of the external world on the condition that God is not a deceiver, Descartes writes, “There is nothing that my own nature teaches me more vividly than that I have a body, and that when I feel pain there is something wrong with the body, and that when I am hungry or thirsty the body needs food and drink, and so on. So I should not doubt that there is some truth in this” (CSM 2: 56; AT 7: 80).² A closer phenomenological analysis of the sensations arising from embodiment (e.g., sense-perceptions, pain, hunger, and thirst) leads to the conclusion that “I am not merely present in my body as a sailor is present in a ship, but ... I am very closely joined and, as it were, intermingled with it, so that I and the body form a unit” (CSM 2: 56; AT 7: 81). This doctrine repeats what Descartes had already published in the *Discourse on the Method*: “it is not sufficient for [the soul] to be lodged in the human body like a helmsman in his ship, except perhaps to move its limbs, but that it must be more closely joined and united with the body in order to have, besides this power of movement, feelings and appetites like ours and so constitute a real man” (CSM 1: 141; AT 5: 59). And the doctrine is again restated in the *Principles of Philosophy* Part 1: 60, immediately after Descartes shows that the mind and body are really distinct (CSM 1: 213; AT 9b: 29).³ So, Descartes is clear and consistent in claiming that the mind and body together compose a single entity. But how should we understand this entity? Is it a substance or not?

Perhaps the mind and body, each a substance on its own, together compose a third kind of substance. On this view, Descartes’s ontology would include God, minds, bodies, and mind-body unions. This view has been called “trialism” to distinguish it from strict dualism. Though odd, there is textual evidence to support it. In the replies to Arnauld, Descartes writes that “the mind is substantially united with the body” (CSM 2: 160; AT 7: 228). He repeats the phrase several lines later, “substantial union does not prevent our having a clear and distinct concept of the mind on its own, as a complete thing.” These statements seem to advance the idea that human beings (mind-body unions) are substances. Additionally, some have argued that when Descartes discusses the nature of sensation (both in terms of the five external senses and the internal emotions and appetites) in any number of works, he means to describe a set of attributes that inhere in the mind-body substance. These “confused perceptions” arise from the way that the soul is united to the body and would not exist without mind-body unions as substances in which to inhere.⁴ On John Cottingham’s explanation of this view, a dualist ontology is not sufficient to account for the existence of sensations in human beings; dualism could only account for purely mechanical entities that lack sensations,

purely spiritual entities with purely intellectual experiences, or minds in bodies in the way an angel might reside in the body (which Descartes explicitly rules out). Cottingham suggests that Descartes's allusions to the close intermingling of substances in the human being and his account of sensation reveal that he is committed to a third type of substance, mind-body unions.

To follow this line of reasoning further, why shouldn't we treat the mind-body union as substance in its own right? Indeed, Descartes seems to have a remarkably loose notion of substancehood. Descartes defines substances as either 1) entities that exist on their own and independently (here he distinguishes created substances from God, where created substances are independent save the ordinary concurrence of God's sustaining power) or 2) subjects of modes and attributes (*Principles* 1: 51-2). Descartes is borrowing classical vocabulary here, but when it comes to his explanation of corporeal substances, the definition appears loose. Some see Descartes as maintaining the view that a corporeal substance is any mereological sum of corporeal bodies with a uniform motion relative to surroundings.⁵ Depending on our point of reference, Descartes appears to reason, one can conceive any of the following things as substances: a man; a man plus his clothing; a man plus his clothing and a ship on which he is standing; or a man plus his clothing, a ship, and the entire earth (*Principles* 2: 11-3). The reason is that, insofar as corporeal substances are concerned, Descartes sees no real distinction between a corporeal substance and the space it occupies. Space merely identifies the external place or boundary of the corporeal substance. And the only way to identify a place is with reference to "its size, shape, and position relative to other bodies" (CSM 1: 228; AT 9b: 47). In other words, the place or space that a corporeal body occupies is really indistinguishable from the corporeal substance. Thus, a corporeal substance just is whatever occupies some determinate space, which is defined by shape and motion relative to some arbitrary set of surrounding bodies. Given that mere aggregates seem to constitute at least corporeal substances for Descartes, why shouldn't he allow that the mind and body, united in the human being, is also a substance? If we allow him this third sort of substance, we would surely resolve the problem of mind-body unity; yet this achievement seemingly comes at the expense of strict Cartesian dualism.

Nonetheless, this modification of strict Cartesian dualism has a historical context. On the classical Aristotelian view, well known to Descartes through his Jesuit education, genuine unity is only found in substances, whereas mere aggregates enjoy only an accidental unity. This distinguishes the unity of the tree with its limbs, for instance, from the unity of a heap of lumber. If you divide a heap of lumber in half, you have two heaps of lumber; but if you divide a tree in half, you have two heaps of lumber. For Thomas Aquinas, there is a special kind of unity—a substantial unity—that individual substances have and mere aggregates lack. Substantial unity is conceived in terms of Aristotle's hylomorphism: it is the unity of form with matter. The relation of form and matter is multifarious: all sorts of properties can be thought of in terms of form, while all sorts of substrate can be conceived in terms of matter. Very generally, forms can be substantial or accidental and matter is basically identified with the four elements. Forms actualize the matter and make it what it really is; they qualify and shape the matter. The substantial form is the principle of identity, unity, actuality, and essence. A substance can tolerate changes in accidental forms but not substantial forms

without thereby becoming a different substance. For human beings, as for all living beings, the substantial form just is the soul. The soul plays an important causal role in organic entities for Aristotelians: it is responsible for growth, development, generation, motion, and perception. It is also constitutive of the essence and identity of the organism. The nature of the soul, on this view, is defined by its function or activity in the body, which explains its essence. While individual souls are distinct, the essence of the soul is shared across the species.

The rational soul of the human being performs a special function among other souls and has, as a result, a special nature. While all souls are responsible for the motion, growth, and operation of organs of the body, the rational soul also engages in thought. For this reason, St. Thomas argues (following Aristotle) that the rational soul, unlike all other souls, is self-subsistent. The reason is that thought can conceive of anything and so, Aquinas reasoned, must not be impeded in any way by a material nature. Whereas the ears are specifically designed to perceive sounds but not colors and the eyes perceive color but not temperature, the intellect can perceive anything in principle. So, Aquinas reasons, the intellect must be free from any specific determination that would result from its being necessarily attached to a corporeal organ. So, Aquinas concludes, the rational soul is not essentially attached to a corporeal organ and therefore can be separated from the body.⁶ In this way, he thought of the rational soul as self-subsistent and thus a kind of substance, even though it is substantially united to the body.

There are places where Descartes seems to endorse exactly this sort of view. For instance, in the *Rules for the Direction of the Mind* Rule 12 (unknown date, but typically thought to be an early work) he writes, “I should like to explain at this point what the human mind is, what the body is and how it is informed by the mind” (CSM 1: 39-40; AT 10: 411). Again, in the *Principles of Philosophy* (1644) he writes, “It must be realized that the human soul, while informing the entire body, nevertheless has its principal seat in the brain” (CSM 1: 279; AT 9b: 315). The same claim is repeated in a number of important letters where Descartes seems to allow the doctrine of hylomorphism in the case of the human being.⁷

Even though this line of reasoning looks promising, there are three somewhat related reasons why Descartes is generally not taken to be able to endorse the hylomorphic unity of mind and body. The first reason is the fact that everywhere else in Descartes’s metaphysics he rejects hylomorphism. In his published work, for instance in the *Meteors*, he is diplomatic, “in order not to disrupt the peace with those Philosophers, I would in no way want to deny what they imagine in bodies beyond what I have discussed, like their *substantial forms*, their *real qualities*, and similar things, except that it seems to me that my reasoning ought to be that much more approved as I made it to depend on fewer things” (AT 6: 239). In his correspondence with Regius—following a controversy over the nature of mind-body union—Descartes offers several arguments against substantial forms, stating that “no natural action at all can be explained by these substantial forms, since their defenders admit that they are occult and that they do not understand them themselves” (CSMK 208; AT 3: 506). Everywhere in nature Descartes explains phenomena reductively, in terms of fundamental matter that has no other qualities than those that come from its being extended in space. Only in the

case of human beings does he seem to invoke the old theory of hylomorphism. Since hylomorphism has no real place in Descartes's metaphysics, the appeal to it in the case of the human being looks ad hoc.

This challenge might be met by examining Descartes's criticisms of substantial forms more closely. Paul Hoffman emphasizes that Descartes's primary criticism of substantial forms or "real qualities" is twofold: 1) they rest on undue anthropomorphism and 2) they explain nothing. However, Hoffman argues, in the case of the human being, the first charge is meaningless and the second irrelevant because there is no alternative explanation for the way that the mind and body appear intimately united. This approach considers Descartes to be happy with hylomorphism as long as there is no other explanation to supplant it (Hoffman 349f).⁸

Even if Hoffman's reply confronts the first objection, a second problem with the hylomorphic view in Descartes makes this solution less probable. Descartes considers it perfectly intelligible to imagine a machine, disposed in every way just like a human being but lacking a soul. He calls such human-machines automata and frequently uses them to illustrate his physics. In the *Passions on the Soul*, he goes so far as to consider that the living body of a man is to a dead one as a functioning watch is to a broken one (*Passions* I: 6). This suggests that the soul is an addition to the normal functioning of the body and so does not share the sort of relation necessary for form and matter under the scholastic Aristotelian view. For Aquinas this difference is most clearly demonstrated by the difference between formed matter and purely unformed or prime matter. For him, matter without a form could exist, but would be so inchoate as to lack any discernable parts and therefore would be nearly nothing (*Summa Theologica*, 44: 2). The idea of a functioning automaton, very closely resembling a human being, but lacking any formal element would seem nonsensical to Aquinas. But Aquinas was not in the majority in denying pure matter all actuality, shape, or motion. As we will see, this has left room for some scholars to see parallels between Descartes and other late scholastics.

Nevertheless, all scholastic Aristotelians would maintain that mind and body have a natural inclination to be united and form a union, whereas for Descartes there is no such inclination.⁹ This inclination to union is expressed by the idea of "incomplete substances." For instance, Francisco Suárez writes, "since neither matter nor form are *per se* complete and whole beings according to their essence, but are instituted by their nature to be composed, that which is composed immediately from them deserves to be called, and is, an essence and nature that is one *per se*."¹⁰ However, on Descartes's view, the mind and body are imagined in a way that each seems very nearly self-sufficient in operation and function. Though he gestures toward the notion of incompleteness in some places, he does not do so in a way that considers incompleteness to be part of the very nature of the soul or body. Instead, for Descartes, the incompleteness of mind or body is merely relative to the whole human being and so not absolutely. Thus, incomplete substances lack the natural fitness they were thought to have on the scholastic view.¹¹

A third objection is somewhat related to the second one. Descartes is quite clear that the self is identical to the mind. Whereas it is in fact the case that I am united to my body (fully and as it were substantially), for Descartes, I am not identical to my

body or my mind-body union. In the famous passage from Meditation 2, Descartes runs through the list of operations that are immediately evident to him and asks which of them is truly identified with himself. Finally, he arrives at the answer, “Thinking? At last I have discovered it—thought; this alone is inseparable from me... At present I am not admitting anything except what is necessarily true. I am, then in the strict sense only a thing that things...” (CSM 2: 18; AT 7: 27). This is as central a Cartesian doctrine as there is, but it nearly disqualifies Descartes from the hylomorphic theory of mind-body union. Here Descartes maintains that only thought is inseparable from his essence. At first, this might not appear to be a problem for the scholastic Aristotelians insofar as the substantial form is the essence or definition of the entity. However, for the scholastics it is quite clear that the soul does not constitute the self. On their view, the human being is essentially a biological organism, not a conscious mind. This was the reason behind Aquinas’s denunciation of “Platonism.” He argues that not only is the matter part of the nature of the human being in the case of an individual, say, Socrates, but also in the case of the general essence of the human being. In particular, there are functions, such as sensation and imagination, that are essential to the human being in such a way that, he says, humans cannot even think apart from matter (*Summa Theologica* I, 75: 4). On the nature of the mind, Aquinas is basically a non-reductive materialist: he believes that the soul is an essential and real part of the organism which cannot be reduced to some more fundamental level of explanation. For this reason, the soul is not a complete substance apart from the body.¹² And the difference from Descartes is clear when, in a letter to Regius, he considers whether the relation of body to soul is accidental or essential.

Moreover, it may be objected that it is not the soul’s being joined to the body, but only its being separated after death, which is accidental to it. You should not altogether deny this, for fear of giving further offense to the theologians; but you should reply that these things can still be called accidental, because when we consider the body alone we perceive nothing in it demanding union with the soul, and nothing in the soul obliging it to be united to the body; which is why I said above that it is accidental in a sense, not that it is absolutely accidental. (CSMK 200; AT 3: 461)

But, for Aquinas, it is the temporary separation of the soul from the body (between death and the resurrection) that is accidental; its union to the body is utterly essential. This line of reasoning provided a strong justification for belief in the resurrection of the body. Even casual partisans to Aquinas’ view of the nature of the human being would be inclined to see Descartes’s view as a kind of Platonic, Angel-in-the-body view. Indeed, Antoine Arnauld raised just this objection to Descartes in the *Fourth Objections* and Descartes replied by invoking the phenomenology of embodiment. However, this reply cannot save Descartes from the charge here. At issue is whether or not the soul is essentially united to the body, whether the body is constitutive of the identity of the person, not whether or not the soul is actually united to the body. Descartes’s phenomenological observations warrant only the claim that the soul is actually united to the body.

Given these issues with Descartes's conception of the soul and body as forming a true substance, I will defend the view of mind-body union as a non-substantial composite. While it may seem inconceivable that human beings, of all creatures, are not considered substances in Descartes, we will see that such a conclusion follows from Cartesian metaphysics more elegantly than the substantial view. Indeed, it is a surprising fact that Descartes never, in all of his writings, refers to the human being as a substance (Kaufman, Rozemond 165). As we have seen, Descartes claims they have a "substantial unity" and that they compose a *per se* entity (*ens per se*). The latter was the standard scholastic definition of substance. So it might be inferred that when Descartes uses this expression, he is implicitly calling the human being a substance. But there is good reason to deny that Descartes would have endorsed the view that all *per se* entities are substances.¹³ In particular, Descartes seems to distinguish between different kinds of unities based on the nature of their composition. Kaufman has argued that Descartes views mind-body composites as a unique sort. Whereas, for Descartes, all other natural, non-human entities share an underlying nature, namely, that they are composed only of extended matter, human beings are composed of both extended matter and mind. This unique sort of composition is most clearly described in the *Comments on a Certain Broadsheet*, where Descartes calls a composite "one which is found to have two or more attributes, each of which can be distinctly understood apart from the other" (CSM 1: 299. AT 8b: 350). Ordinarily, Descartes recognizes substances to have only one principal attribute (*Principles* 1:53) or essential nature. But in the *Comments*, he recognizes that a human being is a composite with two attributes. Kaufman notes that this view of composition leads mind-body unions to have a different sort of unity than other entities: a unity of composition rather than a unity of nature (59). If Descartes held the view that the mind provides the form of the body, he could not think it does so out of some natural or essential tendency. Moreover, if Descartes considers human beings to be substances at all, it is in a weak sense of a composite entity whose organization and function are somehow actually united, but not essentially so.

In the final section, I will try to make a distinction between essential, or genuine, Cartesian substances and existential, actual, or quasi-substances.¹⁴ The claim I wish to make is that the mind and body, for Descartes, compose an existential but not essential substance.

A DISTINCTION BETWEEN PRIMITIVES AND ITS BEARING ON CARTESIAN SUBSTANCES

As is well known, Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia asked Descartes to explain to her how he thinks the soul could move the body or be moved by it given that the soul is wholly immaterial, while his account of motion requires some form of contact or at least shape. It is a genuine problem for which Descartes appears to have no answer. I will set the problem of interaction aside in order to focus on one element of Descartes's reply. He tells Elizabeth that he considers there to be in us certain "primitive notions" that serve as patterns or paradigms on the basis of which "we form all our other conceptions." These notions include the general notions of being, number, duration, and so on; the notion of body as extension; the notion of soul as thought; and the

notion of the soul and body together as a true union. The importance of dividing notions into primitive classes, Descartes goes on, is to prevent us from trying “to explain one of these notions by another, for since they are primitive notions, each one of them can be understood only through itself” (CSMK 218; AT 3: 665-6). This reply is meant to block the request for an explanation of mind-body union.

But in what sense are these notions primitive? In some explanatory sense, it is clear. Yet, this is still ambiguous. Explanatory primitives may be epistemologically primitive in the sense that they are conceptually atomic: they cannot be divided into or explained by any further concepts. Or they may be metaphysically primitive in the sense that they serve a constitutive or causal basis for the explanation of other entities. If we make this distinction, we can see that these three notions are not primitive in exactly the same way. Thought and extension are both metaphysically and epistemologically primitive, while the true unity of soul and body and the general notions are only epistemologically primitive. As a result we can speak of mind-body unions as substances, but only in a partial sense: they actually compose one thing without being a constitutive or causal basis for anything else.

Descartes is clear that the only metaphysical primitives in his ontology are mind as thought and body as extension. In the *Principles* 1: 48, he writes, “I recognize only two ultimate classes of things: first, intellectual or thinking things, i.e., those which pertain to mind or thinking substance; and secondly, material things, i.e., those which pertain to extended substance or body” (CSM 1: 208; AT 9b: 23). I take inspiration for the idea of an epistemic primitives from Descartes’s use of the idea of “simple natures” in the *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*: “since we are concerned here with things only in so far as they are perceived by the intellect, we term ‘simple’ only those things which we know so clearly and distinctly that they cannot be divided by the mind into others which are more distinctly known” (Rule 12: CSM 1: 44; AT 12: 418). In Rule 12, Descartes lists extension, thought, and common notions (“for instance, existence, unity, duration, and the like” (CSM 1: 45; AT 12: 419)) as three classes of simple natures. So, it is clear that thought and extension, as the principal attributes of mind and body respectively, are both epistemic and metaphysical primitives. Contrast this with the common notions of which Descartes says in *Principles* 1: 55 that we should not regard them as “anything separate from things” that are determined by them.

I believe Descartes includes mind-body union among the class of epistemic primitives without for that reason designating it as metaphysically primitive. Recall that when Descartes argues for the unity of mind and body in the *Meditations* and elsewhere, he does so by reference to immediate sensations that are associated with being embodied. We have also seen that some philosophers take sensations, emotions, and appetites to be attributes of a third substance. But for Descartes these sensations are confused perceptions, not clear and distinct. And in *Principles* 1: 66 Descartes notices that sensations arising from the body are frequently mistaken. He counsels, “These may be clearly perceived provided we take great care in our judgments concerning them to include no more than what is strictly contained in our perceptions—no more than that of which we have inner awareness” (CSM 1: 216; AT 9b: 32). In other words, the notions that depend on our mind-body union are only clearly and distinctly perceived when they are reduced to purely mental notions, i.e., to thoughts or attributes of

the mind.¹⁵ This shows that, for Descartes, the mind-body union does no explanatory work; it does not provide a metaphysical basis for explaining even those sensations that are most closely tied to it.

Descartes appears to reserve the concept of substance for notions that are metaphysically primitive. Substances provide the explanatory bases for Descartes's metaphysics. When Descartes defines substance in the *Principles*, he notes that substances cannot be known directly, but only through an attribute. Yet, he says, "each substance has one principal property which constitutes its nature and essence, and to which all its other properties are referred" (CSM 1: 210; AT 9b: 25). This has come to be known as the one principal attribute thesis.¹⁶ I do not have the space to enter into a defense of this thesis. Suffice it to say that, in this sense, Descartes is a thoroughgoing reductionist. He takes all properties to be reducible to some primary or fundamental property; he just denies monism, claiming instead that there are two such fundamental properties (in the natural world). And, he reserves the word "substance" for that in which fundamental properties inhere. Since there are no fundamental, explanatory properties that inhere in the mind-body union, it is not a substance in the strict sense.

If the mind-body union were a substantial union of either a hylomorphic or some other variety, then, to be a true Cartesian substance, it should serve as the explanatory basis for some phenomena. Indeed, there ought to be a certain kind of property, an essential attribute, whose nature it is to inhere in the mind-body union. Some have argued that the sensations play this very role. But these sensations, Descartes notes, are not clear and distinct and thus cannot be used to identify essences, since you cannot be sure that you are picking out one property, rather than an illusion, nothing, or multiple properties. However, if the mind and body are non-substantially united, then Descartes can attribute the sensations associated with embodiment either to the mind or to the body, or to both in the sense of having dual aspects. Moreover, the unity of mind and body would not need to be based on any fundamental, metaphysical feature of Descartes's ontology. It would be a brute fact. This view would set Descartes's understanding of the human being directly at odds with the scholastic notion, but not in a completely radical way. That is, we do not have to infer that the mind-body union is a mere composition or aggregate, for Descartes. Rather, he could maintain that some entities are substantial in a weaker sense than others. Perhaps this weaker sense of substantial union could be cashed out in modal terms where quasi substances would be real unions, but only in some possible world, e.g., the actual one. Genuine substances, serving as they do an explanatory basis, would be substances necessarily. In this way, Descartes could maintain that the mind and body form a substantial union (in the actual world) without maintaining that the mind-body union is necessarily a substance.

NOTES

1. A note on terminology: since Descartes uses the words "mind" and "soul" as roughly interchangeable, I will slide between the two uses. Indeed, there is no worthwhile philosophical distinction to be made between souls and minds, for Descartes. The soul [*anima*] just is the rational soul [*anima rationalis*]¹⁷—there are no other souls. The scholastics call the rational soul *mens*, *mentis*, which is a cognate of mind. For Descartes, both soul and mind denote thinking substance [*res cogitans*]. Also, when I speak of the scholastics, I am referring

broadly to the tradition of Late Scholastic Aristotelianism.

2. A note on citations of Descartes's complete works: I will be using the Cottingham, Stoothoff, and Murdoch translations and citing the Adam and Tannery, *Oeuvres Complete*, pagination as well as (CSM volume: page; AT volume: page).

3. Other statements of the view are found in the Fourth replies (CSM 2: 266; AT 7: 389) and the Sixth set of Replies (CSM 2: 285-6 and 296-8; AT 7: 422-4 and 439-45) as well as the correspondence with Regius, the *Comments on a Certain Broadsheet*, and Letters to Mesland, Voetius, and Fr. Dinet.

4. See Cottingham. A similar view can be seen in Guerolt and Gouhier.

5. This is controversial; some hold that there is only one corporeal substance—all of physical nature.

6. *Summa Theologica*, 75: q. 3.

7. To Regius (AT 3: 492-503); to Fr. Mesland (AT 4: 346); to Voetius; and to Fr. Dinet (AT 8: 587).

8. Descartes's view here seems similar to the position of Francisco Suárez, who starts his argument for the substantial forms from the idea of the human being as a form-matter composite. Indeed, Suárez appears to extend the self-subsistence of substantial forms from the case of the human being to all other cases (Hattab).

9. In the letter to Regius (January 1642) Descartes does say that in order for there to be a true substantial union "there is indeed a natural requirement on the bodily side, of an appropriate positioning and arrangement of the various parts; but nevertheless the union is different from the mere position and shape and the other purely corporeal modes, since it relates not just to the body but also to the soul, which is incorporeal" (CSMK 209; AT 3: 508). This suggests some, very minimal inclination at least on the part of the body to acquire a soul.

10. Quoted in Kaufman 47 (DM 4.3.8).

11. Rozemond 155-64 and the *Fourth Replies* (CSM 2L 156-7; AT 7: 222-3). See also Kaufman 47 for an account of the sense of incompleteness in Descartes.

12. See Pasnau Chapter 3.

13. Rozemond 1998, 168-9 finds two places in Suárez where *ens per se* does not mean substance, so Descartes could be using *ens per se* in this weaker sense.

14. I take the distinction between existential substances and essential substances from Secada, where he distinguishes essentialism from existentialism. I agree with Secada that, in the strict sense, he is an essentialist (in his terminology), though I think that in the case of mind-body union, he attempts to accommodate existentialism.

15. In this sense, I agree with the interpretation of Wilson and Rozemond.

16. See Rozemond 19-28.

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