

# Discourse on the method

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How would Descartes respond? Rene Descartes would have responded by making response to the fundamental role of the mathematics as a science in explaining the profound effect upon the existing natural and artificial systems of the world.

He says, " I was especially pleased with mathematics because of the certainty and clarity of its proofs...since its foundations are so firm and solid" (Descartes, 2006). His disregard to religious stringent and unopposed explanations regarding natural systems serves to provide support for his statement. He described religious explanations as lacking clear forms of backing by describing them as, "...nothing but apathy, or pride, or despair, or parricide" (Descartes, 2006). His opposition to abstract views was very clear and in fact this is what led to the formulation of the ' Discourse on Method.' Where are their arguments similar? In Galileo's letter to the Grand Duchess of Christina, he aims at establishing the fundamental connection between science, astronomy and religion elements.

His argumen revolves around the formulation of a proposed theory regarding the existence of the solar system components and their position effect on the earth's motion. He derives support of his arguments by refuting those fronted by Ptolemy and Aristotle on astronomy. He opposed his religious critiques on his stand by stating in his letter, " they persist in their self-appointed task of beating down me and my findings by every imaginable means, they have decided to shield the fallacies of their arguments with the cloak of simulated religiousness and with the authority of the Holy Scripture, unintelligently using the confutation of arguments they neither understand nor have heard' (Finocchiaro and Galilei, 1989). This statement serves to

show the manner in which Galileo's and Descartes' arguments are similar with the regard to their opposition to religious principles in explaining certain phenomenon. Where are they different? The two philosophers are different in the fact that Galileo's arguments rely upon the production of physical proof as opposed to the theoretical propositions of Descartes in his ' Discourse method', in which he strives to derive philosophical underpinning by referring to the explanatory benefits of mathematics in explaining physical happenings. Galileo on the other hand strives to use his experiments by giving physical examples in deriving the association of the earth and the sun concerning motion studies.

Are they compatible or not? The two philosophers are entirely compatible in various ways. For instance, they share similar views with regard to their opposition on religion's stand on ethics in the explanations of normal human happenings. Apart from this, they both criticised views from previous theories established by earlier philosophers. For instance, when Descartes says, " I took the best features of geometrical analysis and of Algebra, and correlated all the defects of one by the other" (Descartes, 2006). Galileo on the other hand argues, "...I support this position not only by refuting the arguments of Ptolemy and Aristotle, but also producing counter arguments..." (Finocchiaro and Galilei, 1989).