Metaphysics Exercise 7


1. The Meditator looks into the causes of error because:
   a. The conclusion of the Second Meditation, that I am a thinking thing, would
      be thrown into doubt if I could not determine exactly when God would or would
      not allow her to go wrong, and so could not trust any “thinking.”
   b. The conclusion of the Third Meditation, that God exists, would be thrown
      into doubt if I could not understand why he allows me to go wrong.
   c. The conclusion of the First Meditation, that an evil demon might be de-
      ceiving me, would be thrown into doubt if it turned out that God himself is a
      deceiver.
   d. Error is the only form of imperfection which she knows for sure exists.
   e. (a), (b) and (c).
   f. None of the above.

2. It makes a difference whether error is due to a “pure negation,” rather than
   a “privation” (as those are defined on p. 100), because, according to Descartes:
   a. God needs no justification for creating something which includes a pure
      negation.
   b. Every finite thing is purely negative: it is nothing but negations. So a
      privation must be referred to an infinite cause.
   c. There can be pure negations in God, but not privations. So we can under-
      stand how God be a cause of the former in creatures, but not of the latter.
   d. A pure negation is a quantity; a privation is a differentia (essential charac-
      teristic). So something which includes a privation is of a bad kind (essentially
      bad).
   e. All of the above.
   f. None of the above.

3. Which of the following are part of the Meditator’s solution to the problem
   of her own imperfection (the Problem of Evil)?
   a. She realizes that she has not proved that God is perfect, but only that he
      exists.
   b. She realizes that she is never actually in error, since she is essentially only
      a thinking thing, and, as a rationalist, she believes that thought as such is
      essentially true.
c. She realizes that she is, as it were, half way between God and nothingness, and that the nothingness in her needs no cause to explain it.
d. She realizes that she ought to doubt her own imperfection, as well. How does she know that she is really imperfect?
e. She realizes that since (as she assumes) God exists and is perfect, all her imperfections will eventually be removed.
f. None of the above.