Metaphysics (or Epistemology) Exercise 5


Note this is to be done on-line via Question Cloud if possible. However, if this proves impossible for some reason, please hand this in as a hard copy or e-mail your answers to your TA.

1. There would have to be something wrong with the cogito argument if we could show that:
   a. It is not possible for there to be a powerful evil deceiver of the kind Descartes imagines.
   b. Descartes never existed.
   c. We are all just fictional characters in a novel by Cervantes.
   d. We don’t create our own identities—they are created for us by society.
   e. The sentence “I exist” involves a misuse of the word “exist,” such that it cannot be either clearly true or clearly false.
   f. (b) or (c).

2. After asking the question, “What am I?”, the Meditator first considers the answer that she is a body. She considers this answer first because:
   a. Descartes thinks this is right answer; therefore, he puts it in her mouth immediately to get us used to it.
   b. This was her old opinion.
   c. This is the traditional (Aristotelian) answer.
   d. This is the traditional (Christian) answer.
   e. This answer seems to follow from her argument so far.
   f. (a) and (e).

3. In the sixth paragraph of the Second Meditation (p. 82), the Meditator excludes sense perception from what she can show herself to be, because “this surely does not occur without a body.” She says this because:
   a. She is afraid it would be heretical to suggest that there can be sense perception without a body, since this would make the Eucharist impossible.
   b. This was her old opinion.
   c. This is the traditional (Aristotelian) opinion.
   d. This is Descartes’s opinion. He is a rationalist because he thinks the senses are corporeal and therefore subject to deception.
   e. (b) and (c).
   f. None of the above.