

1. How are the metaphysical views laid out in Part I of Descartes's *Principles* related to the scientific views defended in later parts of the work?
2. Is the physics of Descartes's *Principles* able to allow for the identity and persistence of ordinary material objects such as trees and tables?
3. **Either** (a) How successfully does Descartes resolve the problems created by his definition of motion in the *Principles*?
Or (b) How does Descartes's doctrine that matter is extension shape the physics of his *Principles*?
4. How does Descartes attempt to reconcile the fact of human error with the perfection of God? Is he successful in his attempt?
5. **Either** (a) Explain and evaluate Descartes's *Third Meditation* argument for the existence of God
Or (b) Explain and evaluate Descartes's *Fifth Meditation* argument for the existence of God.
6. What does Descartes hope to achieve by introducing (a) the hypothesis that the meditator might be dreaming, AND (b) the hypothesis that the meditator might be the creation of a deceiving God? How important is it to his project that he should distinguish between these two hypotheses?
7. Does Descartes argue in a circle in attempting to validate the truth of clear and distinct perceptions?
8. '...[A]lthough I clearly and distinctly know my nature to be something that thinks, may I perhaps not be wrong in thinking that nothing else belongs to my nature apart from the fact that I am a thinking thing? Perhaps the fact that I am an extended thing may also belong to my nature' (Arnauld). Does Descartes have a satisfactory response to this objection?
9. Descartes writes in the Sixth Meditation that the proper purpose of our sensory perceptions is simply to inform the mind of what is beneficial or harmful for the mind-body composite; we misuse them by treating them as reliable touchstones for immediate judgements about the essential nature of external bodies. How does Descartes attempt to establish this view? What is its importance for the project of the *Meditations*?

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10. Explain and assess Malebranche's arguments for the claim that no finite creature is a genuine cause of any effect.
11. How, according to Malebranche, do we see things in God?
12. Can Malebranche's occasionalism be reconciled with human freedom?
13. In *The Search after Truth*, Malebranche itemises several limitations of the imagination. Critically discuss TWO of them.
14. What, according to Malebranche, is wrong with studying history? Is his view persuasive?
15. Assess Spinoza's argument for the view that revelation can teach us something we cannot learn from philosophy.
16. What is prophecy, according to Spinoza? Critically examine his defence of the claim that prophecy provides us with probable knowledge.
17. In the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* Spinoza describes the state as founded on a contract (*pactum*). What, in his view, constitutes a contract?
18. On what grounds does Spinoza defend toleration, and how much toleration does he defend? Critically assess his view.
19. Compare and contrast the roles of the prophet and the sovereign as they are discussed in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*.

END OF PAPER