

TOPICS FOR THE SECOND PAPER

Write a short essay of 3-4 pages (1500-2100) words) on *one* of the following topics.

Papers are due Session 19.

In writing your papers, please attend to the paper guidelines for the class.

1. In Descartes *Meditation II*, what is the argument that I (the meditator) exist? Does the argument involve an inference? Does it matter whether the argument involves an inference? Develop an objection to the argument. If the objection is unsuccessful, say why; if it's successful, discuss whether the argument can be changed to avoid the objection.
2. Present Descartes's argument for the existence of God in *Meditation V*. Develop two objections to the argument. Critically discuss each: if the objection is unsuccessful, say why; if it's successful, discuss whether the argument can be changed to avoid the objection. (Keep in mind the point of arguing for the existence of God at this point in the argument of the *Meditations*, i.e., what knowledge is Descartes entitled to rely upon as premises.)
3. Cavendish and Princess Elizabeth both give arguments against Descartes' dualism. Reconstruct their arguments and say how they differ (if at all). Critically evaluate those arguments. In doing so, think of the best response Descartes could give. Then evaluate that hypothetical response.
4. Aristotle, and Descartes each offer a conception of the mind/soul. Carefully sketch both conceptions and the considerations the philosopher offers in favor of it. Compare the two views you have chosen. Which view do you find most compelling and why? Consider how the other philosopher would object to your favored view and provide a response.
5. Hume thinks all ideas are copies of impression; this is the Copy Principle. Reconstruct and evaluate his two explicit arguments for this claim. Then consider his own counterexample to the Copy Principle (the missing shade of blue) and determine whether this counterexample is a serious problem for his theory.

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