Descartes’ enormously influential Meditations seeks to prove a number of theses: that God is a necessary existent; that our minds are equipped to track truth and avoid error; that the external world exists and provides us with information to preserve our embodiment; and that minds are immaterial substances. The work is a treasure-trove of views and arguments, but there are controversies about the details of the arguments and about how we are supposed to unpack the views themselves. This Companion offers a rich collection of new perspectives on the Meditations, showing how the work is structured literally as a meditation and how it fits into Descartes’ larger philosophical system. Topics include Descartes’ views on philosophical method, knowledge, skepticism, God, the nature of mind, free will, and the differences between reflective and embodied life. The volume will be valuable to those studying Descartes and early modern philosophy more generally.

David Cunning is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Iowa. He is the author of Argument and Persuasion in Descartes’ Meditations (2010) and Cavendish (forthcoming).
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The Cambridge Companion to
Descartes' Meditations

Edited by David Cunning
University of Iowa
In memory of
Annette Baier (1929–2012)
and
Paul Hoffman (1952–2010)
# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of contributors</th>
<th>page xiii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>xvii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviations and translations</td>
<td>xviii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Cunning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 The methodology of the <em>Meditations</em>: tradition and innovation</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christia Mercer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 The First Meditation: skeptical doubt and certainty</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Larmore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 The First Meditation: divine omnipotence, necessary truths, and the possibility of radical deception</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Cunning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 The Second Meditation and the nature of the human mind</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilli Alanen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 The Second Meditation: unimaginable bodies and insensible minds</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katherine J. Morris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 The Third Meditation: causal arguments for God’s existence</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence Nolan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Third Meditation on objective being: representation and intentional content
AMY SCHMITTER 149

The Fourth Meditation: Descartes' theodicy avant la lettre
THOMAS M. LENNON 168

The Fourth Meditation: Descartes and libertarian freedom
CECILIA WEE 186

The Fifth Meditation: Descartes' doctrine of true and immutable natures
TAD M. SCHMALTZ 205

The Fifth Meditation: externality and true and immutable natures
OLLI KOISTINEN 223

The Sixth Meditation: Descartes and the embodied self
DEBORAH BROWN 240

Sensory perception of bodies: Meditation 6.5
ALISON SIMMONS 258

Descartes' dualism and its relation to Spinoza's metaphysics
ALAN NELSON 277

The Meditations and Descartes' considered conception of God
ANNETTE BAIER 299

Bibliography 306
Index 319
CONTRIBUTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS AND TRANSLATIONS

Unless otherwise indicated, the chapters in this volume use the translations from volumes I and II of *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, edited by John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch, and *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, Volume III: The Correspondence*, edited by Cottingham, Stoothoff, Murdoch, and Anthony Kenny. All three volumes are published by Cambridge University Press (1985, 1984, and 1991). These volumes are referred to as ‘CSM 1’, ‘CSM 2’, and ‘CSMK’, respectively.

References to Descartes’ writings in their original language are from *Oeuvres de Descartes*, Volumes I-XI, ed. Charles Adam and Paul Tannery, Paris: Librarie Philosophique J. Vrin (1996). These are abbreviated ‘AT’, followed by the volume number and page.

The following abbreviations are used for titles of Descartes’ works.

- **Meditations**
- **First (or Second... ) Replies**
- **“Synopsis of the Meditations”**
- **Principles**
- **Passions**
- **Discourse**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Original Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meditations</td>
<td>Meditations on First Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First (or Second... ) Replies</td>
<td>First (or Second... ) Set of Replies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Synopsis of the Meditations”</td>
<td>“Synopsis of the following six Meditations”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles</td>
<td>Principles of Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passions</td>
<td>The Passions of the Soul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourse</td>
<td>Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting one’s Reason and Seeking the Truth in the Sciences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

xviii