

BA EXAMINATION 2002

for Internal Students

This paper is also taken by Combined Studies Students

PHILOSOPHY

Modern Philosophy from Bacon and Descartes to Kant

Thursday, 9 May 2002: 10.00 – 1.00

Answer THREE questions, at least ONE from Section A and ONE from Section B. Candidates taking optional paper (I) Philosophy of Kant may NOT attempt questions from Section C. Avoid overlap in your answers.

SECTION A

1. What is Descartes' Dreaming Argument? Does Meditation VI provide a satisfactory solution to the worry that the argument raises?
2. EITHER (a) 'Descartes' notions of clarity and distinctness are themselves neither clear nor distinct.' Discuss.
OR (b) Is Descartes' validation of clear and distinct ideas circular?
3. Descartes insisted that he did not argue that mind is distinct from body until the Sixth Meditation. What, then, does the Second Meditation contribute to his argument for the claim that mind and body are distinct substances?
4. Expound and assess the argument Spinoza gave for his claim that there cannot be more than one substance.
5. EITHER (a) 'There is a fundamental inconsistency between Spinoza's necessitarianism and his account of freedom.' Discuss.
OR (b) How persuasive is Spinoza's interpretation of the relation between freedom and reason?
6. What account did Spinoza give of the relation between the mind and the body? How coherent is it?

TURN OVER

7. Describe and evaluate the arguments Leibniz gave for his claim that 'there is no such thing as two individuals indiscernible from each other' (Leibniz to Clarke, IV.4).
8. EITHER (a) 'The individual notion of each person includes everything which will ever happen to him' (*Discourse on Metaphysics*, xiii). Does this leave room for human freedom?
- OR (b) Does Leibniz adequately answer the charge that his system does not allow for contingent truths?
9. EITHER (a) 'Since the only substances that Leibniz is prepared to recognise (in late works such as the *Monadology*) are characterised by psychological attributes such as perception and appetite, his final system is a form of idealism.' Discuss.
- OR (b) 'Since Leibniz did not really believe in material substances, the pre-established harmony between mind and body cannot be a harmony between two *substances*.' Discuss.

SECTION B

10. What grounds did Locke give for drawing a distinction between primary and secondary qualities? Do they in fact provide an adequate basis for doing so?
11. 'Locke's account of personal identity fails because he tries to analyse the necessarily transitive relation of identity in terms of non-transitive relations of memory.' Explain and discuss.
12. 'Different Men . . . have different Essences of Gold, which must therefore be of their own, and not of Nature's making.' (*Essay*, III. vi. 31). What did Locke mean by this? Does it imply that the classifications that we make of things in the world are arbitrary?
13. What are Berkeley's reasons for beginning the *Principles of Human Knowledge* with an attack on the Lockean theory of abstract general ideas? How damaging are his criticisms?
14. Expound and assess Berkeley's arguments for the existence of God.
15. Does Berkeley's immaterialism leave room for the possibility of tasting the very same wine that one sees?
16. In what sense, if any, was Hume a sceptic about causation?

TURN OVER

17. 'The identity which we ascribe to the mind of man is only a fictitious one' (*Treatise*, I. iv. 6). Did Hume deny the unity of the mind, or simply advocate a new view of what it is?
18. How fair is it to say that Hume considered belief in an external world to be irrational?

SECTION C

19. Assess Kant's reasons for thinking that our knowledge of arithmetic and geometry is neither analytic nor a posteriori.
20. Explain and evaluate Kant's claim that space and time are forms of intuition.
21. What, for Kant, is the difference between his own Transcendental Idealism and the Empirical Idealism which he ascribed to Berkeley? Is the difference really as great as he supposed?
22. What was Kant trying to achieve in the Transcendental Deduction of the Categories? How far was he successful?
23. 'Kant's "Copernican revolution" in epistemology ought rather to be seen as an anti-Copernican counter-revolution.' Discuss.

END OF PAPER