

History of Modern Philosophy Spring, 2007

Answer exactly *three* of the following questions, answering at least one from both sections. In each case you should give as much detail as you can and defend your claims in as much detail as possible. You should allot about an equal amount of time to answering each question.

Section 1

1.1 Even some of Descartes' contemporaries worried that his argument in the *Meditations* was circular. What circularity did they have in mind, and why? Is the line of argument in the *Meditations* circular?

1.2 Spinoza is often said to defend a dual-aspect view of the relationship between mind and body. Explain what this view amounts to, then evaluate its plausibility.

1.3 What does Leibniz think that *monads* are? Give an example of something that he would count as a monad. Then explain his reasons for thinking there are such things and the general role they play in his philosophy.

1.4 Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz are usually classified together as rationalists. What common aspects of their views lead to this grouping? Are there any important ways in which it is misleading?

1.5 Compare the views of any two of two of the following on substance: Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz.

1.6 Explain and evaluate at least one of the arguments from any one of the following philosophers for the existence of God: Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz.

Section 2

2.1 Explain Locke's views on the distinction between primary and secondary qualities. What role does this distinction play in his philosophy? How plausible are his views on the matter?

2.2 Berkeley argues that *to be is to be perceived*. What does he mean by this? Explain in detail some of the ways that he defends this claim.

2.3 Describe the views of Locke and Hume on personal identity. How do they defend their views of this matter? How plausible are their views?

2.4 Locke, Berkeley, and Hume are usually classified together as empiricists. What common aspects of their views lead to this grouping? Are there any important ways in which it is misleading?

2.5 Berkeley claims that his position on ordinary objects like apples, unlike that of the "materialist," is commonsensical and avoids scepticism. How does he think materialism is contrary to common sense and leads to scepticism, what is his position on these objects, and how does he think his view is not contrary to common sense and avoids scepticism?

2.6 Compare the views of any two of two of the following on substance: Locke, Berkeley, and Hume

2.7 Explain in detail, then critically evaluate, Hume's views on causation.

2.8 Explain in detail, then critically evaluate, Kant's views on causation.