Philosophy 303

4/21/20

Handout #10:

Study Questions for Second Exam

*Four* of the following questions will appear on the second exam (two from Group A and two from Group B), which will be held via Canvas Assignments on Tuesday, April 28th. You will answer **one**question from each group. You will have sixty minutes to complete the exam.

Group A:

1. Spinoza holds that sticks and stones, not to mention your body and the chair in which you are now seated, are all “modes” of a single substance considered under the attribute of extension. Why does this claim seem puzzling? Why does it seem less puzzling on Curley’s interpretation? How is Bennett’s interpretation different from Curley’s? How does Bennett’s interpretation make sense of Spinoza’s further claim that there cannot be a vacuum in nature in a way that Curley’s doesn’t?
2. In *Monadology* §§8-9, Leibniz makes two claims: that some monads must be qualitatively unlike some other monads, and that each monad must be qualitatively distinct from every other monad. How does he support each of these claims? Be sure to explain his assumption that nature is a *plenum*, his principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles, and his Principle of Sufficient Reason.
3. What is Leibniz’s “mill” thought-experiment from *Monadology* §17? Briefly describe the experiment and the conclusion it is intended to support. In class, we discussed two possible interpretations of Leibniz’s thought here. After describing both, explain the objection that Leibniz faces on the most straightforward interpretation. Then explain why his argument fares better on Jolley’s interpretation. In your view, is Jolley’s interpretation well supported? (In answering this last question, be sure to consider the textual evidence.)

Group B:

1. First, explain Locke’s view of the relationship between an organism and the mass of matter that occupies the same region of space. What problem is this view intended to solve? Next, explain Locke’s view of the relationship between a “man” (or human organism) and a person. What, according to Locke, makes statements of the form “*a* is the same person as *b*” true, when they are true? Illustrate with reference to his thought experiment involving the prince and the cobbler. Finally, present one objection to Locke’s account of personal identity.
2. In *Essay* II.viii, Locke says at least three different things to distinguish primary from secondary qualities. What are the three things (as discussed in class), and how are they different from one another? Which seems most promising and why? (Be sure to relate it to *each* of the other two, and to provide clear examples of primary and secondary qualities in your discussion.)
3. Locke seems to find an intractable problem involving our ordinary concept of a substance. Carefully explain what he thinks the problem is and why he thinks it is intractable. (Explaining why Locke finds the problem intractable will involve explaining why neither of the obvious solutions seems acceptable to him.) Why doesn’t Locke’s predicament seem surprising in light of his view of mental representation? (Be sure to describe the relevant features of his view of mental representation.)