



Strathmore
UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES
BACHELOR OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES AND PHILOSOPHY
BDP 3102: HISTORY OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY
END OF SEMESTER EXAM

DATE: Friday 20th November, 2020

Time:13:30 – 15:30

INSTRUCTIONS: This exam has Five Questions. Answer **Question 1** and **any other two**.

QUESTION 1 (Answer **all** questions. 30 Marks)

1. Two of the many characteristics of Modern Philosophy are Autonomy and the Primacy of Reason. What exactly is meant by autonomy, and what relation does it have with the primacy of reason? (4 marks)
2. Modern Philosophy was preceded by the nominalism of William of Ockham. What effect did nominalism have on Modern Philosophy in general? (5 marks)
3. The Divine Command Theory (DCT) of morality was held by many Modern Philosophers. How does it contrast with Natural Law Theory (NLT) as held by the preceding Scholastic Philosophers? (4 marks)
4. David Hume divided all knowledge into two types: impressions and ideas. What is the difference, and how would he explain something like an imagination of a pink elephant, even though such a thing doesn't exist? (5 marks)
5. Concerning God, almost all Modern Philosophers attempted to insert him in some way in their philosophy. In what specific way does God feature in the works of the following Philosophers?
 - a. Leibniz. (3 marks)
 - b. Francis Bacon. (3 marks)
 - c. Blaise Pascal. (3 marks)
 - d. Baruch Spinoza. (3 marks)

QUESTION 2 (15 marks)

- a. For Francis Bacon, “Knowledge is Power.” However, power can be abused. Explain the two remedies proposed by Bacon to prevent this abuse. (7 marks)
- b. Knowledge is Power led to three types of ambition in man. What were they, and which one did Bacon propose as the ideal? (4 marks)
- c. Explain two ways in which Bacon’s “Narrow Induction” was wrong. (4 marks)

QUESTION 3 (15 marks)

- a. Both Thomas Hobbes and John Locke have the idea that all men are equal, but this equality has different consequences. Explain what the different consequences of this equality are in both philosophers. (3 marks)
- b. Therefore, what is the difference between Hobbes’ notion of Right of Nature and Locke’s idea of human rights? (5 marks)
- c. What is goodness and evil for John Locke, and how does this differ from the scholastic (and Aristotelian) idea of good and evil? (4 marks)
- d. For what reason did Locke propose that there should be a social contract, which included a judiciary, if all men are equal? (3 marks)

QUESTION 4 (15 marks)

- a. In Kant’s famous essay, “What is enlightenment,” he states two causes of man’s self-imposed immaturity. Briefly explain what these causes are. (4 marks)
- b. According to the author, what simple thing is necessary for the enlightenment? (2 marks)
- c. Francis Bacon, has similar views to the author above and approaches the problem of immaturity with the concept of “Idols”. Explain what he means by Idols, and briefly explain each of the four “Idols” he talks about in the “Novum Organum” (9 marks)

QUESTION 5 (15 marks)

Read the text below from Rene Descartes and answer the questions that follow.

“That in order to seek truth, it is necessary once in the course of our life, to doubt, as far as possible, of all things. As we were at one time children, and as we formed various judgments regarding the objects presented to our senses, when as yet we had not the entire use of our reason, numerous prejudices stand in the way of our arriving at the knowledge of truth; and of these it

seems impossible for us to rid ourselves, unless we undertake, once in our lifetime, to doubt of all those things in which we may discover even the smallest suspicion of uncertainty.”

- a. Explain the four steps of the Cartesian Method for arriving at truth. (5 marks)
- b. Explain how Descartes reached the conclusion, “I think, therefore I am”. (5 marks)
- c. Descartes provides two proofs for the existence of God: the proof from causality and the ontological proof. Explain any of them. (5 marks)