

### A.6.1 TEST 3 – Spinoza and Leibniz – Study Guide

The third examination will take place on Wednesday, March 25th., at the regular time and place for class. It is closed books, closed notes.

#### What the examination will be looking like

The examination will consist in

1. 3 definitions (1 point each)
2. 1 quotation explanation (2 points)
3. 5 short questions (5 points each)

The total will be on 30 points, and will count for 5% of your final grade for the course.

**The definitions** will be chosen out of the list below.

The definitions are given in the course notes. You should give an *example* in order to show that you understand the definition. To get these three points, you just have to learn and understand the definitions in the course notes...

**The quotation explanation** consists in the following:

- I will choose a passage from the readings
- You will have to:
  1. specify from which text it is taken (as precisely as you can);
  2. describe what is the point that the author intends to make;
  3. explain the argument that the author is using to establish the point (presumably, this involves appealing to the context of the passage given: the passage alone may not contain all the elements you need to explain what is going on).

Don't go into too much detail, but be precise. You should be able to answer with two or three sentences for each of the last two questions.

**The questions** will be chosen out of the list below.

The questions are short and simple. Your answer should share both qualities. That said, you should aim at explaining yourself fully. Concretely, you should not expect to be able to answer with just one sentence. More than one paragraph, on the other hand, is probably too much. Always define the technical terms you use. Always provide examples to illustrate your point.

The questions are meant to check your knowledge of the material covered in class. You are not asked to know more than what was said in class and what is in the course notes.

As you may notice, the questions are largely inspired from, if not identical to, the study questions. This means that a good way for you to work is to (1) prepare the study questions before class; and (2) revise your answers after class. This way, your answers will be ready for revision for the following exam.

### Definitions and Questions

**Definitions** – Make sure to give examples when applicable:

1. Substance (for Spinoza)
2. Attribute (for Spinoza)
3. Mode (for Spinoza)
4. Anthropomorphism
5. Materialism
6. Idealism
7. Mind-body dualism
8. Adequate Idea (Spinoza)
9. Truth of reasoning (Leibniz)
10. Truth of Facts (Leibniz)

### Short Questions :

1. Spinoza's *Ethics* is written according to "geometrical order". What does it mean? In which domains are we still using the geometrical order?

2. What are the relationships between substances, modes and attributes within Spinoza's philosophy? Give an example to illustrate.
3. According to Spinoza, did God create the world out of an arbitrary act of free will? Explain in what sense Spinoza's God is the cause, and the only truly free cause of everything that exists.
4. How does Spinoza conceive of the relationships between thought and extension? How does his view compare to Descartes'?
5. How do you understand the 7th proposition of the second book of the *Ethics*: "The order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things"?
6. What kind of being do humans have according to Spinoza? What are the relationships between the human body and the human mind according to Spinoza?
7. What is the conatus? To what does it correspond from the point of view of the attribute of extension?
8. How does Spinoza characterize what an individual is?
9. What are the kinds of knowledge according to Spinoza? Which one is the source of error?
10. According to Spinoza, how can we hope to master our passions and reach a form of tranquility of the mind? How can we hope to reach the greatest happiness?
11. According to Leibniz, what kind of thinking and knowledge do humans share with animals? What kind of thinking and knowledge does distinguish humans from animals?
12. Does everything that happens in the universe happen necessarily according to Leibniz? Is there an element of chance in the universe? Explain.
13. Are the necessary truths of logic, mathematics and morals the results of God's decree according to Leibniz? How does he argue for his view on this point?
14. Explain Leibniz' criticism of Descartes' ontological argument. What is his own version of the ontological argument?

15. What does Leibniz understand by “best possible” when he claims that God has created the best possible world? In what sense is the world the “most perfect”? How does Leibniz explain the appearance of evil?
16. What are the most fundamental constituents of the world according to Leibniz? What are the characteristics of Leibniz’ notion of substance? What does it mean that substances are “self-contained”?
17. Why does Leibniz think that we should not despise the scholastic notion of substantial form? For which domain of knowledge can such a notion be useful? Why?
18. How do you understand Leibniz’s claim that: “every substance is a complete world and like a mirror of God or of the whole universe, which each one expresses in its own way”?
19. If each of us, being an individual substance, is a complete independent world, how come that we appear to be interacting in a common world?
20. How does Leibniz argue that we are free, even if we are self-contained substances? How does Leibniz argue that we are responsible for our actions, even if it is God who decided to create us as we are, that is, as self-contained substances, in the first place?