

Final exam essay

Technology, Development



How is the Principle of Sufficient Reason (PSR) used by the advocate of the Cosmological Argument to justify the two premises of the argument? Make sure to clearly define dependent and self-existent beings, and also to explain the two parts of PSR and how each part is used to justify a different premise of the argument.

The Principle of Sufficient Reason is clearly used when attempting to define whether something is in existence or not. The maxim of dependency is also to be discussed here and one has to analyse whether a human being is dependent on something to become someone. This theory has been used by several philosophers such as Leibniz and Schopenhauer.

The first part of PSR indicates that for every action, there is to be an equal and opposite reaction. On this note if there is an X there has to be a Y and these are equal and opposing forces. Leibniz rejected the concept of fatalism in his teachings focusing more on how success can be achieved with positive influence and subtle probings.

The second part of PSR according to Schopenhauer focuses more on the assessment that when a judgement is used to describe knowledge, there must be sufficient grounding or reason to do so. One cannot actually define an argument by passing judgement on it but man's inhumanity to others may also come into the discussion. Reasoning is also dependent on other factors when achievement is considered.

So as a recap, self-existent beings have no problem in achieving what they want to whilst those who are dependent have problems in achieving their goals. Fatalism is also a factor here and finally one can only reach the peak of his powers if he is motivated with reason being the principal factor.

According to Aristotle, how does an individual come to lead a good life?

Include a discussion of happiness, our unique function as human beings, character, virtue, and the mean. In explaining the mean, briefly offer your own example of someone acting courageously and what that entails

A good life is defined by several aspects, and according to Aristotle this means living a balanced life first and foremost. It is important that a good life contains what is termed to be a fair measure of happiness since only then can life be enjoyed in equal measure.

The human being can enjoy various aspects of life based on the senses, so for example a beautiful view can instil the thrill of happiness into somebody whilst this can also be changed to include a good dinner. A good life also needs to include a proper assessment of financial power and the ability to spend but always in moderation, at least to Aristotle

A strong character is perhaps also essential in the leading of a good life since virtue is also paramount in this respect. Thus one can live with one's conscience especially after taking certain decisions which are not always conducive to material or financial gain but which are the right ones to take. For example if one is offered a bribe and refuses, he would have lost financial compensation but in the end he feels satisfied since he has taken the right decision according to his conscience.

Happiness can also be found in other aspects such as religion and a musical collection where the principle of Aristotle's mean is also extremely important to achieve balance.

What makes someone the same person over time according to John Locke's theory of personal identity? How does Thomas Reid expose a contradiction in

Locke's theory with his example of the boy who is flogged. Lastly, briefly explain Hume's critique of the traditional notion of the self.

Locke's theory of personal identity focuses on the fact that a man is born with that identity and this actually does not change essentially and it dies with him. It is true that circumstances in a man's life may change and become different so that life is intrinsically full of events but the identity remains the same.

Reid states that since circumstances can change a person's life drastically, this means that the identity will also change over time. He brings an example of a boy who is flogged as that experience of scarring and beating will change his identity forever. Although this is arguable, the factor that a man has blue eyes will not change with circumstances so Locke may defend his theory on the score of physical resemblance.

The way a person reacts to a situation is also instructive as this may mean that he will use certain facets of this identity to do so. It all boils down to how much he can control himself and to how this control actually means that he is changing his mindset on issues. So in a sense both Locke and Reid are right on this.

Hume criticises the self as being something impersonal which one cannot put a finger on. This essentially means that the self is egocentric and egotistical with the final assumption that man has to achieve greatness if he strives ahead with his goals. However there is also the notion that the self cannot be compartmentalized or criticised in difficult situations. Hume is a critic of the assumption that the self is the be all and end all in life.

Works cited:

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