

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

577 0070

MA Examination
for Internal Students

PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy of Mind

Tuesday 26 May 2009: 10.00 – 1.00 pm

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions. Avoid overlap in your answers.

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1. What is the best option for a physicalist who wants to avoid type-reductionism?
2. 'Jackson's knowledge argument shows that Mary is changed by her new experience, but not that she comes into contact with some non-physical aspect of reality.' Discuss.
3. 'Zombies may be conceivable, but they are not possible.' Discuss.
4. 'How can mental phenomena affect what happens physically? Every physical outcome is causally assured already by pre-existing physical circumstances; its mental antecedents are therefore left with nothing further to contribute.' Discuss.
5. 'Actions are bodily movements caused and rationalized by an agent's desire for an end and a belief that moving her body in the relevant way will bring about that end.' Is this a defensible account of actions?
6. Is it right to claim that an agent's doing something intentionally is the same as her successfully *trying* to do? Does this claim escape the objections that have been made to volitionist theories of action?
7. EITHER (a) What is the best argument for eliminativism about beliefs and desires? How should we respond to it?

OR (b) 'We attribute beliefs and desires through rational interpretation. So no neuroscientific discovery could show that beliefs and desires do not exist.' Discuss.
8. 'All there is to being a true believer is being a system whose behaviour is reliably predictable via the intentional strategy' (Dennett). Discuss.
9. Does Fodor succeed in his aim of vindicating folk psychology?
10. 'The content of our beliefs does not supervene on our intrinsic properties alone, because differences in environment that do not affect such properties can alter the content of our beliefs.' Discuss.
11. Is the content of beliefs determined by their conceptual roles?
12. EITHER (a) 'Causal accounts of content fail because they cannot allow for misrepresentation.' Discuss.
OR (b) Can an appeal to biological functions provide the basis for an adequate naturalistic account of content?
13. Could there be a rational agent who is incapable of introspection?

14. 'One does not become aware of the fact that one is having a certain sensation by peering inward at the sensation itself. To see the facts that reside within, one has to look at the objects that tell you what is going on within, and these objects are all outside' (Dretske). Explain and assess this claim.
15. Is there any special obstacle to knowledge of other minds?
16. Is the externalist about mental content committed to the possibility of *a priori* knowledge of empirical facts?

END OF PAPER