

M.A. EXAMINATION 2004

for Internal Students

Philosophy of Science

Friday, 4 June 2004: 10.00 – 1.00.

Answer THREE questions. Avoid overlap in your answers.

1. What's new about the so-called 'new riddle of induction'? Does the new riddle require a new solution?
2. EITHER (a) What, if anything, is the difference between *confirmation* and *corroboration*? What is the significance for scientific practice?

OR (b) Why does Hempel want explanations to double as predictions? How was this 'symmetry thesis' borne out in his own account of explanation?
3. What is 'the problem of old evidence'? How, if at all, can it be solved?
4. What are the main problems of the regularity theory of laws of nature? Is there a way to get round the problems?
5. EITHER (a) What reasons are there to prefer the 'semantic' view of theories to the 'received' view?

OR (b) Is truth a necessary condition for explanatory power? That is, given that *A* explains *B*, must *A* be true?
6. EITHER (a) Why does Kuhn think that the shifts involved in scientific revolutions are not wholly rational? Does that mean that they are wholly irrational?

OR (b) Is Kuhn a social constructivist?
7. 'The underdetermination of theory by data refutes scientific realism.' Discuss.
8. What is the 'natural ontological attitude'? Does it provide us with a satisfactory half-way house between realism and antirealism?

9. How vital is the observable vs. non-observable distinction for van Fraassen's constructive empiricism? Can we be constructive empiricists without a sharp distinction between the observable and the unobservable?

TURN OVER

10. Critically discuss one version of standpoint epistemology.
11. Is it desirable that some or all of the special sciences should be 'reduced' to some one fundamental science?
12. Assess the view that space-time is a real physical entity.

END OF PAPER