

# ~BQE Text, Fall 2021~

## ***Instructions***

For each of the two texts for FA21, select one of the two questions to answer. Your written response should take the form of an essay. Ensure that you respond to every aspect of the prompt for each question you answer. Strive for clarity and lucidity—these features are often prized in the evaluation of answers. Your exam will be evaluated on your ability to engage the prompts in ways that demonstrate your comprehension of just the two selected texts, including your comprehension of the meaning and truth-value of their major claims, the structure of their arguments, their technical concepts and the application of those concepts, and so forth.

## ***Submission***

All identifying information should be removed from the exam (including in document properties). Completed exams should be e-mailed to Kaz Mogi <kaz.mogi@csulb.edu> by or before 4:00pm on Saturday November 20<sup>th</sup> 2021. You should cc both yourself and the Department Chair, Dr. Nell Wieland <nellie.wieland@csulb.edu>. In your e-mail to Kaz, but only in your e-mail, make sure to include your student ID number. Keep a copy of the exam for your records.

## ***Text 1: Bruno Latour (2004), Why has critique run out of steam? From matters of fact to matters of concern. Critical Inquiry, 30(2): 224–248.***

1. This paper begins by highlighting an alleged problem for deconstructivism. Articulate the problem by stating it as an argument in standard form. How does Latour suggest that problem can be remedied? That is, how would Latour object to the argument that you reconstructed? Describe and evaluate the version of deconstructivism that emerges from Latour's response.
2. Latour provides an unflattering account of the contemporary critical scene with the assistance of a couple of diagrams, which he maintains is roughly applicable to 90% of critiques. (See Figures 1–5, and especially the diagrams labeled 'Move One' and 'Move Two'.) Firstly, explain Latour's account. Given this account, why is participation in the contemporary critical scene seductive? Is this assessment of critique applicable to philosophy? If not, explain why not. If it is, supply an example from philosophical discourse that exemplifies Latour's analysis.

## ***Text 2: Hilary Putnam (1973), Meaning and reference. Journal of Philosophy, 70(19): 699–711.***

3. Putnam sets out to argue against a particular conception. Firstly, describe that conception as clearly as you can; use examples if necessary. Next, reconstruct Putnam's argument against this conception in standard form. (The conclusion should negate the conception you described previously.) After reconstructing his argument in standard form, briefly outline the reasons Putnam offers in support of his premises, and articulate the inferential steps taken. Finally, do your best to develop an objection to Putnam's argument, ensuring to prioritize clarity.
4. Putnam argues that part of the meaning of a term consists in its extension as determined by *same<sub>L</sub>*. And on pages 710–711, Putnam asserts the following: '[w]e have now seen that the extension of a term is not fixed by a concept that the individual speaker has in his head, and this is true both because extension is, in general, determined socially—there is division of linguistic labor as much as of "real" labor—and because extension is, in part, determined indexically. The extension of our terms depends upon the actual nature of the particular things that serve as paradigms, and this actual nature is not, in general, fully known to the speaker'. Firstly, explicate the notion of *same<sub>L</sub>*. Secondly, and in light of the quoted passage, discuss the following: does Putnam's account imply that the average person communicates using words for which they rarely if ever know the meaning? Why or why not? Make sure to explain and justify your answer. Is this a problem for Putnam's account?