Synthesis paper
InterQuest

Objective: to demonstrate in writing the ability to express a well-reasoned interpretation of the relations between the ideas of two classic philosophers.

Directions: Compose a 2-3 page paper (500-750 words) in which you accomplish the following:

* Identify a point of relation between the ideas of two classic philosophers.
* Give a reasoned explanation as to why that point is significant.
* Give a reasoned analysis and explanation of one of the philosopher’s ideas on that point with references to relevant texts, quotes, etc.
* Give a reasoned analysis and explanation of one of the philosopher’s ideas on that point with references to relevant texts, quotes, etc.
* Give a reasoned analysis and explanation of the relations between the ideas of the two philosophers relevant to the point that you have identified.
* Conclude with your reasoned assessment of what conclusions may be drawn from these relations.

In this paper you are forming an interpretation by drawing a conceptual connection between some aspects of two major thinkers. Making such connections is a common mode of scholarly writing in philosophy and many other fields. In order to make the connection point(s) clear, you must give a strong account of each thinker’s ideas (at least those that are relevant to the point of connection that you are establishing). A point of connection or a relation between two thinkers does not have to be an agreement or total overlap at all. It may be an opposition of ideas. It may be a shared assumption leading to different conclusions. It may be a shared conclusion reached by different premises. It may be different descriptions of the same phenomena. The key insight to be gained is that when any two people come together intellectually, there will be points of connection which will be expressed as agreements, disagreements, questioning, debate, and even confusion. This is where philosophy leaves the strictly personal sphere and becomes social. Throughout the term I have emphasized that applying philosophical methods to your own thinking will increase your own abilities. This assignment is designed to demonstrate that philosophical methods may also increase our abilities to relate to other people and their ideas.

Criteria: Your paper will be graded based on the following criteria:

1) Your work indicates a careful and well-reasoned effort to present and explain selected ideas that two philosophers have in relation.
2) Your analysis of each philosophers’ ideas are well-researched with appropriate references to particular sources and appropriate use of quotes as support for your claims.
3) Your effort to make comparisons, find similarities, and/or differences - and to make those connections clear - is evident.
4) Attention has been given to charity in writing, spelling, and grammar.

Submit: To submit this paper, use the Paper Submission Form. Enter your name and email address and select the "Synthesis" title, then select the Submit button.