



General Certificate of Education

Philosophy 5171/6171

Unit 5 Texts

Mark Scheme

2007 examination – June series

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Levels-of-Response Marking Criteria

Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria. Question-specific marking notes are provided for reference on the following pages.

Part (a)**Total: 14 marks**

- (i)** 2 marks: A full answer in accordance with the mark scheme.
1 mark: A partial answer.
0 marks: An incorrect response.
- (ii)** 4–6 marks: The candidate selects and applies relevant aspects of the passage in a directed and coherent manner. There are few, if any, errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation.
1–3 marks: The candidate selects and applies some relevant aspects in a directed manner. Some points are omitted and there may be lack of clarity at the lower end. Errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation may be present.
0 marks: No relevant aspects are selected.
- (iii)** 4–6 marks: The candidate selects relevant material which displays a directed evaluative element. The central requirement of the question is addressed in a coherent and well-expressed form.
1–3 marks: Some relevant material is selected but evaluation or criticism may be lacking or misdirected. There may be errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation.
0 marks: No relevant knowledge is displayed.

Part (b)

Total: 11 marks

Knowledge and understanding of text, showing an awareness of the arguments developed within it. The ability to identify, select and apply ideas and examples employed in the development of the philosopher's position, which involves a capacity to interpret text.

- 9–11 marks: The candidate shows detailed knowledge and understanding of the positions, concepts and argument, displaying an ability to select and apply relevant material in a sustained, coherent and well-structured form.
- 6–8 marks: The candidate displays either a detailed knowledge and understanding of limited aspects of the relevant material or a wide-ranging but non-specific grasp of the material. They select and apply relevant information, but do not draw on it fully, or leave important details out. The answer is coherent and direct, but could contain passages that are not expressed clearly, or fail to sustain relevance.
- 3–5 marks: The candidate displays either a basic knowledge and general understanding of the material, or a limited grasp of at least one topical idea, selecting some relevant as well as some irrelevant material – but some knowledge is effectively deployed. The answer only partially addresses the question and could contain passages that are expressed very badly. There may be much repetition or assertion.
- 0–2 marks: This response is seriously incoherent or fragmentary, displaying little or no relevant knowledge.

Part (c)**Total: 25 marks**

The ability to interpret, analyse and evaluate philosophical argument, showing awareness of weaknesses and strengths in the Philosopher's position, and demonstrating the ability to express and defend their own positions, offering reasoned and supported judgements, and appropriate examples. This engages candidates' knowledge and understanding and their ability to select and apply relevant textual information. The candidate's ability to organise her/his response coherently and in good English is also assessed.

- 20–25 marks: The candidate displays an ability to analyse, interpret and critically assess the issues and relevant evidence, supporting their own judgements with reasoned and considered argument. The response reads as an integrated whole developing in a coherent and fluent way. There are few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- 15–19 marks: The candidate demonstrates an ability to analyse and evaluate some relevant material and to form judgements relevant to the requirements of the question. The arguments and/or supporting material will lack the imagination, insight or penetration characteristic of the top level. There may be occasional errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- 10–14 marks: The candidate demonstrates a limited appreciation of the key issues. Supporting material may not always be well selected, but the ability to select some relevant material must be present. Lower marks may denote responses that are not always well integrated. Evaluation must be present but tends to lack penetration and/or depth. Some errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation may be present.
- 5–9 marks: The candidate displays an ability to analyse and interpret a limited range of relevant material. Reasoned criticism tends to be replaced by the assertion of positions. The question may be read as one-dimensional. There may be errors of reasoning and understanding. There may also be errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- 0–4 marks: The candidate demonstrates little or no ability to interpret, analyse or evaluate relevant material. Responses are likely to be incoherent in relation to the requirements of the question. They may be fragmentary. Errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation may be intrusive.

1. *Text: Aristotle's 'Nicomachean Ethics'***Total for this question: 50 marks**

NB The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(a) (i) identify **two** attributes of the gods; (2 marks)

supremely happy and blessed (1 mark each, 1 mark for no evil desires). **2 marks**

(ii) briefly describe how Aristotle tries to show that perfect happiness is a kind of contemplative activity; (6 marks)

The gods are seen as happy/living beings – but this cannot relate to the actions they perform (examples from text). If the actions are removed, then we are left with contemplation. Therefore their happiness must consist of this. If we emulate this, we are partaking in what is most god-like. **6 marks**

(iii) suggest and briefly develop a criticism of the claim that what is most god-like is the happiest activity. (6 marks)

- (1) The gods are so unlike us that it is hard to see how their happiness could have any implications for us. The way they are described in the passage may be used to support this point.
- (2) What are the objects of contemplation? Clearly not the objects of human actions. Could happiness consist of the contemplation of the purely abstract? There may be discussion of what kind of happiness this would be and whether it could apply to man in general.
- (3) The above point may be approached from a socio-political stance, eg such contemplation being valued so highly may result in a kind of intellectual elitism.
- (4) It is odd that Aristotle should appeal to the gods in a work that is so concerned with man. It is particularly odd that he should try to establish something so important as the highest kind of happiness in this way.
- (5) Statements of alternative positions on happiness, preferably accompanied by the observation that such accounts are independent of any appeal to the gods and this is desirable in ethics.
- (6) The gods are portrayed too anthropomorphically or negatively – for them to be living beings they become like humans minus action.

6 marks

- (b) Outline and illustrate Aristotle's account of voluntary action and responsibility. (11 marks)

An account of voluntary action and responsibility is vitally important for purposes of moral judgement and legislation. In the case of voluntary action, the agent is the initiator of the action and contributes to it. He is responsible and may also be held responsible for actions which flow from the initiating cause (text examples). Voluntary actions are likely to be contrasted with involuntary actions. These latter actions are done through compulsion or ignorance. In the case of compulsion the agent does not contribute to the act as it is external events that are all important. Aristotle discusses borderline cases (examples). These are voluntary given the circumstances – but they are not considered voluntary in the abstract. Such actions can be praised/blamed, others are pardonable. There are also actions that should never be performed regardless of external pressures. Ignorance refers to the particular circumstances of the act; ignorance of purposes is not excusable hence moral responsibility is preserved.

11 marks

- (c) Assess the ethical significance of the Doctrine of the Mean. (25 marks)

There should be some account of the Doctrine. It is ethically significant as it is concerned with the development of virtuous character. Things are destroyed/corrupted by excess and deficiency – virtue is said to be a mean between two extremes. Bravery or temperance are likely illustrations. We avoid the extremes and this is how every art fulfils its function. Virtue must also aim at the mean in relation to actions and passions. We must aim at the mean relative to us, thus the doctrine has significance for action. Determining our mean must be related to the kind of person we are (wrestler example).

Critical Discussion

- (1) The doctrine is weak on actual content. The kind/amount of virtue to be cultivated is relative to the person. The mean is said to be determined by practical wisdom but this raises a difficulty. Aristotle seems to be saying that the good life can vary from person to person as it is relative to them, *and* that a moderate life is right for all. As what is 'moderate' varies from person to person, nothing particularly informative seems to have been said regarding the *content* of such lives.
- (2) Blame is proportional to the amount of deviation from the mean. This implies a considerable uniformity as to what counts as the mean in various cases; this must be the case as we blame people for what they do, not what they do relative to themselves. Aristotle was aware of the problem of specifying permissible deviations when much variation is allowed in individual cases.
- (3) Aristotle tells us that the problem raised in (2) above can be dealt with by saying that the decision rests with perception. Again, the problem concerns the lack of information content in the solution.
- (4) Does the doctrine have anything to say regarding moral dilemmas? If there can be a clash with the virtues, it is not clear that the doctrine has anything significant to offer. There may be comparisons with other ethical theories to illustrate how such dilemmas might be resolved.

- (5) The doctrine suffers from theoretical deficiencies. The doctrine is incomplete as there are admitted exceptions. Presumably we know these independently of the doctrine. The doctrine does not apply to some virtues eg justice. The doctrine may be regarded as contrived. To lend it credibility, Aristotle invented names for some vices.
- (6) The questions: ‘what kind of person ought I to be?’ and ‘what is right relative to me?’ do not mean the same and may not have the same implications for moral action. There is the further problem that the kind of person one is may be the reason why one is having moral difficulties. It may also be argued that there is a circularity problem: can one specify what kind of person one is prior to attempts to hit the mean? This might be regarded as disanalogous with cases like the wrestler.
- (7) There is more to being virtuous than the mastery of a technique. Candidates may explore whether this is a fair criticism. Such responses are likely to examine the role of reason in a broad sense.
- (8) Defence of Aristotle, eg the Doctrine is not intended to provide solutions to moral questions, but does provide a rough guide for social action.

25 marks

[Maximum for question: 50 marks]

2 Text: Hume's 'An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding'**Total for this question: 50 marks**

NB The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(a) (i) identify **one** definition of 'cause'. (2 marks)

Either: an object followed by another, and where all the objects similar to the first are followed by objects similar to the second. Or: if the first object had not been, the second never had existed. NB abbreviated forms which retain either meaning are equally acceptable. **2 marks**

(ii) briefly explain why Hume thinks that the relation of cause and effect is so important. (6 marks)

All reasoning concerning matters of fact and real existence are dependent upon this relation. It is through this relation alone that we can attain knowledge that goes beyond the immediate testimony of senses and memory. The relation underpins science's utility enabling us to control, regulate (predict). **6 marks**

(iii) suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Hume's account of causation. (6 marks)

- (1) The definitions given do not have the same meaning. Examples may be used to illustrate this.
- (2) The second definition is suggestive of necessity in a way that the first is not.
- (3) The first definition faces a difficulty with the problem of simultaneous causation.
- (4) The problem of accidental conjunctions with an example may be discussed.
- (5) There is a problem concerning what Hume means by 'similar'. Similarity judgements can be made *after* a causal connection has been established.
- (6) The second definition faces a problem with effects that are overdetermined.
- (7) How does the constant conjunction thesis lend support to counter-factuals?
- (8) How important is repetition in assigning causal connections? One-off examples might be provided.

6 marks

- (b) Outline and illustrate Hume's Principles of Association and state what they are intended to explain. (11 marks)

They are intended to explain the coming together of ideas in the mind that gives rise to thinking. The principles operate in a purely naturalistic way. (There might be analogical reference to Newtonian method).

- (1) Resemblance (picture/original)
- (2) Contiguity in time or place (apartments in the same building)
- (3) Cause and effect (wound/pain)

Any correctly applied examples will suffice.

11 marks

- (c) Assess Hume's claim that all ideas are dependent on sense impressions. (25 marks)

There should be some discussion of Hume's radically empiricist epistemology. There are no innate ideas. All our ideas must have had preceding sense impressions. The ideas are fainter copies of these impressions. Complex ideas for which there are no impressions are explained in terms of the imagination combining simple ideas given in experience. Hume supports his thesis by appealing to the fact that where there are deficiencies in a sense organ, there are no ideas characteristically associated with that organ. Ideas are causally dependent on impressions. He challenges us to find an idea, of either internal or external senses that does not have a corresponding impression.

Critical Points

- (1) Hume's own counter-example: the shades of blue. He dismisses it as so singular that we need not bother about it. The dismissal is too cavalier. It is not so singular as any phenomenon which admits gradations could also be used.
- (2) Even if the shades of blue was singular, it could be argued that this is exactly what a counter-example to a generalisation should be. Examples may be used to support this.
- (3) The shades of blue problem is not easily remedied by an appeal to the operations of the imagination. The imagination combines simple ideas to form complexes but the missing shade is a simple idea. Even though there is some lack of clarity in Hume regarding what is a simple/complex idea, what is clear is that a colour patch is a simple idea.
- (4) Hume's thesis can be amended without too much damage to accommodate examples like the above, eg the thesis is broadly right but too particularised.
- (5) The consistency problem. His thesis subverts his own account of how we acquire the idea of necessary connection. Repetition is not a sense impression.
- (6) Candidates may select ideas that are not obviously based on sense impressions, eg God, infinity, liberty and discuss the adequacy of a Humean response. There may be a general discussion of abstract ideas/universals. Consistency of copy principle with itself and with Hume's arguments on induction.

- (7) Hume's thesis is too dependent on the copy principle. He underplays the active or organisational features of the mind. Our acquisition of general principles is hard to account for in terms of imprinting alone. This may be expanded into a discussion of knowledge in general or the formulating of imaginative scientific hypotheses, eg dark matter – or less dramatic ones. A further illustration would be the Kantian categories.
- (8) There might be some support for innate knowledge theories, Descartes, Plato, Chomsky adapted appropriately.
- (9) It could be argued that Hume was wrong to claim that mathematics does not give us knowledge about the world and his theory of impressions fails to account for such knowledge. This might be developed into a more general defence of rationalism.
- (10) Hume misdescribes our experience of the world. The fact that our experiences can be sub-divided does not imply that we experience the world in terms of sub-divisibles – at least not where single objects are concerned.

25 marks

[Maximum for question: 50 marks]

3 Text: Mill's 'On Liberty'**Total for this question: 50 marks**

NB The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(a)	(i)	identify the two aspects of the progressive principle;	(2 marks)
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love of liberty/improvement.

2 marks

	(ii)	briefly describe Mill's account of the role of custom;	(6 marks)
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It is antagonistic to liberty and progress. It has had a damaging effect in many parts of the world. When custom is unquestioned the results are tragic (example of East). Progression comes to an end when custom replaces or takes precedence over individuality. This holds true of even advanced societies.

6 marks

	(iii)	suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Mill's view that custom is a form of despotism.	(6 marks)
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- (1) Mill underestimates the stability provided by custom. It provides a background against which individuality can be distinguished or identified.
- (2) Mill upholds moral rules by appealing to their having stood the test of time (rule-utilitarianism). Can the same argument apply to custom? Or, is Mill's attack on custom consistent with general utilitarian principles?
- (3) Mill may have overstated his case in ascribing so many social/political ills to the dominance of custom. This may be questioned, individual examples can be considered. Alternatively, the absence of custom may have resulted in greater ills.
- (4) Burke's idea of a partnership between the living and the dead. Custom could be regarded as meeting this provision, or providing moral certainty.
- (5) Should custom be compared with a tyrant/absolute ruler? These concepts may be analysed and differences elucidated between them and custom, eg the role of consent.
- (6) Mill's attack on custom assumes too optimistic a view of human nature – many would be lost in the absence of custom.

6 marks

(b) Outline and illustrate Mill's case for freedom of action.	(11 marks)
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There should be a clear statement of Mill's limiting principle: the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. The state has no right to interfere in matters affecting only the individual. The individual is sovereign over his own mind and body – he must be allowed to grow individual development and progress. His own good is not grounds for intervention. The principle does not apply to those not of sound faculties or barbarians. The principle should be illustrated with an example.

11 marks

(c) Assess whether Mill was right to claim that no opinion should be suppressed.	(25 marks)
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Mill has a number of arguments against the suppression of opinion. Of considerable importance is the fallibility argument – in suppressing an opinion you are effectively deciding for others in advance of discussion. This amounts to an assumption of infallibility. Mill also offers the dead dogma argument, the supplement argument and the reinforcement argument. Government suppression cannot be justified even in the case of dangerous opinion. Liberty of discussion is the very condition which allows us to decide truths for the purposes of action. The supposed utility of a belief is itself an opinion and therefore requires discussion. There may be some reference to Mill's free market of ideas – views must be allowed to compete in order for truth to emerge. Suppression of opinion would be incompatible with Mill's conception of man as a progressive being.

Critical Points

- (1) It is possible to suppress opinion without feeling infallible (Gibbs). This misses Mill's point: deciding for others *logically* implies the assumption. Reference to what may or may not be felt is irrelevant psychology.
- (2) Mill underestimates the protection needed for the weak and vulnerable, especially in a media dominated society. This could lead to a discussion of what is meant here by 'weak', 'vulnerable', – eg they have to be vulnerable in relation to something.
- (3) Related to (2) would be the claim that Mill overestimates the level of rationality in a society. Mill could reply that his estimation only needs to be that which is consistent with democratic participation. It may also be argued that this objection should serve as an incentive to improve rationality and that would be best achieved through free discussion.
- (4) There can be genuine clashes between truth and utility. There are difficulties in claiming that truth is part of utility as one can think of cases where they are separate and distinct. Credit should be given for examples where truth could conflict with the public interest.
- (5) The above point might be expanded into a discussion of Mill's utilitarianism and the problem of holding two absolute principles which can conflict. If truth is part of utility would this be a contingent matter?

- (6) There is likely to be some discussion of incitement cases given in some recent political events and trials. Mill gave a clear example of incitement – angry crowd – which seems to imply immediate physical danger. If we move away from this is there some level of description whereby just about any expression can be regarded as incitement? The publication of photographs depicting true states of affairs have been described as ‘incitement’.
- (7) Related to the above, candidates may argue that direct/immediate physical harm must be distinguished from merely causing offence.
- (8) The free discussion of ideas advocated by Mill is an empty notion today for those without access to the mass media.
- (9) Freedom of discussion is open to abuse. Sensationalism, intrusion and profit can be pursued under the guise of free inquiry. It is, however, only through free discussion that they can be exposed. The possible abuse of a valuable principle does not imply that we should surrender that principle.
- (10) There is no guarantee that Mill’s free market of ideas will produce truth. Reply: it at least ensures the possibility.

25 marks

[Maximum for question: 50 marks]

4 Text: Nietzsche's 'Beyond Good and Evil'

Total for this question: 50 marks

NB The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(a)	(i)	identify the strangest feature of the new language;	(2 marks)
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Not objecting to a judgement just because it is false.

2 marks

(ii)	briefly explain what Nietzsche regards as important in our judgement;	(6 marks)
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The issue of truth/falsity is not the primary consideration. What matters is the extent to which the judgement furthers/preserves life, preserves/cultivates the species. Untruths achieve this – we admit them as a condition of life and this implies a transformation in our value. Untruth is indispensable.

6 marks

(iii)	suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Nietzsche's position on truth.	(6 marks)
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- (1) He seems to accept that there is a distinction between truth and falsity and that this can be recognised. To go on to claim that this is not what matters flies in the face of philosophical and scientific enquiry.
- (2) Nietzsche places his philosophy not only beyond good and evil, but also beyond rationality. The admission of untruth should be avoided regardless of alleged advantages.
- (3) The project is self-defeating. Judgements regarding which untruths are socially beneficial are *themselves* subject to truth/falsity. The value of truth thus re-emerges at this level, or any thesis which undermines truth will undermine itself.
- (4) The truth of a judgement can be objectively ascertained, judgements regarding what furthers life or cultivates the species are open to too much subjective interpretation.
- (5) The judgements referred to above are inherently value-laden and thus the thesis does not take us beyond good and evil. Rather, it brings these concepts to bear in making the vital judgements.
- (6) Perspectivism ultimately leaves us without a reason for accepting it or fails to supply a reason for accepting one perspective over another. Theories which allow appeals to truth have a distinguishing criterion.
- (7) It is false to suggest that any philosophy concerned with how we should live, and by implication, treat others, can place itself beyond good and evil.
- (8) Nietzsche fails to provide a convincing dismissal of those philosophers who have allegedly pursued truth, eg Descartes, Kant, Plato, a reference to any *one* would be sufficient. Even *ad hominem* arguments presuppose that the psychological speculations are *true*.

6 marks

(b) Outline and illustrate Nietzsche's **three** stages of religious sacrifice. (11 marks)

Three rungs of the ladder are of central importance. The first concerns the early period sacrifices of human beings to god. This may involve the sacrifice of loved ones. This period is exemplified by pre-historic religion and the Romans. The second rung concerns the moral epoch where our instincts, our very nature, is sacrificed. This is exemplified by the wild stare of the ascetic living contrary to nature. Finally, there is the modern epoch. Here, God himself is sacrificed ultimately for the sake of nothingness. Hope, faith, harmony, justice are all sacrificed. This period may involve the worship of stupidity, heaviness, fate and ultimately, nothingness.

11 marks

(c) Assess Nietzsche's account of master morality. (25 marks)

There is likely to be an initial distinction between master and slave morality. Nietzsche claims that there are two basic traits or moral codes to which all others ultimately reduce: master and slave morality. These can co-exist within the same society and even within the same person. In master morality 'good' will refer to the predominance of certain noble traits, proud states of the soul, aristocratic values. It is the individual not the action which determines the moral predicate. Moral historians have inverted the true relation – moral predicates are applied derivatively to actions. The master/noble type will determine value. He is severe with himself and respects what is severe (Viking morality). This severity alienates modern taste. Opposed to master morality is slave morality born out of fear and self-protection. What is valued is what relieves misery and suffering, eg pity, kindness or Christian humility. Evil is thought of in terms of evoking fear – what the master would regard as good. In slave morality 'good' is closer to stupidity and liberal freedom is essentially a slave notion. The master will subjugate the weak, there is no room for sentimentality. The master will exploit the weak and this should not be judged on the moral plane. To do so would fail to recognise the organic nature/function of such exploitation. It is as much a part of life as any organic process and to deny it is to deny life itself.

Critical Discussion

- (1) From alleged facts about nature or organic processes what follows *morally*? Candidates may invoke the fact-value gap.
- (2) Attempts to avoid the above difficulty by claiming that Nietzsche's judgements are not ultimately moral fail. There are two standard ways of arguing for this: (i) any judgements regarding the treatment of others are inherently moral, (ii) to deny this is to alter our concept of morality beyond recognition.
- (3) There is a strain in Nietzsche between giving an account that is beyond morality and yet at the same time moral. If there are moral implications, then it is also open to rejection on moral grounds.
- (4) There could be some discussion of the exploitation perpetrated by the master. Again, there could be a fact-value gap. Alternatively, our ability to resist exploitation opportunities may be seen as setting us aside from nature.
- (5) Seeing exploitation as an organic function could be regarded as an attempt to incorporate pseudo-science or evolutionary principles into ethics (cf Spencer).

- (6) It is not clear why exploitation should be selected as the essence of life. What rationale governs Nietzsche's selection? This point could be generalised or expanded to cover other selection issues.
- (7) Nietzsche is inconsistent – his whole account relies on *truths* about nature. If it is claimed that all that is required is that such judgements be life-enhancing, then the majority will reject them
- (8) There is a problem in distinguishing the strong from the weak. Objections similar to those used by Socrates against Callicles may figure here, eg the herd are now the stronger.
- (9) Nietzsche's historical account is suspect. He could be accused of naïvety or romanticism. Values cannot be simply transported across epochs. Would modern society object to Viking morality in terms of psychological type or in terms of what they did?
- (10) Related to the above is the difficulty of separating off types of individual from the actions they perform. It is difficult to establish different epochs here in terms of the directedness of the moral judgement.
- (11) The masters are parasitic on the herd. The creators of new values require a background against which they can react.
- (12) The implementation of master morality would be a social and political disaster. If adopted internationally, it would be a recipe for chaos and suffering.
- (13) For the master what is good for him is good *per se*. This seems to imply that he could never question the goodness or rightness of what he is doing. Is this really what is meant by transcending good and evil?
- (14) Marx-type criticisms may emphasise the material conditions behind change. They may claim that the human spirit is itself a social phenomenon and thus there is an important sense in which it cannot transcend social boundaries.
- (15) How does one stand outside morality *and* establish a hierarchy of values?
- (16) On the one hand Nietzsche stresses the differences between master and slave values but his remarks on co-existence, at the social and individual level, seem to detract from the differences. How does the severity he admires co-exist with the pity and sentimentality he finds repugnant? There is a clear sense in which they can, as the same person may exhibit them in different contexts – but there does not seem to be anything here of particular philosophical interest other than that there are different values.

25 marks

[Maximum for question: 50 marks]

5 Text: Russell's 'The Problems of Philosophy'**Total for this question: 50 marks**

NB The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(a) (i) what are we said to be in the habit of doing? (2 marks)

Judging the real shapes of things.

2 marks

(ii) briefly explain why Russell distinguishes the real table from the appearance of the table; (6 marks)

Although we think we see the real table, this is an unreflective judgement. The table looks different from different points of view – examples. Experience teaches us to construct the real shape from the appearances, but the real shape is inferred not directly seen. Our senses seem to tell us about the appearance of the table, not the table itself.

6 marks

(iii) suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Russell's claim that we *infer* the real shape. (6 marks)

- (1) Russell is reifying the appearances of the table, eg if a rectangular table looked square or rhomboid from a particular point of view, this does not imply that there is a square/rhomboid *something* in the world.
- (2) That an object should look different from different points of view is exactly what we should expect and is entirely predictable. That things happen in accordance with our expectations is not a reason for saying we do not directly perceive objects.
- (3) If we never have access to the real shape, how do we know what it is or that there is a real shape?
- (4) Russell seems to be using 'inference' in an odd way. There does not appear to be any conscious process whereby we move from one premise/object to another.
- (5) Relevant, directed criticism of the sense-data theory. This needs to sustain relevance with the inference of shape. **6 marks**

- (b) Outline and illustrate Russell's solution to the problem of induction. (11 marks)

The notion of probability is important in Russell's formulation of the inductive principle. Probabilities of general laws are less than those of particular cases as particular cases can be true without the general law being true. In regard to particular things/events, where A and B have been constantly associated without exception, the greater the probability that this is so in a new case. When this has happened enough times, the probability of its continuance approaches certainty. This same point is then applied to the probabilities of general laws – they approach certainty. It is only through acceptance of such a principle that we can justify general scientific principles and the beliefs of everyday life.

There is likely to be some reference to what the problem is – this might be implicit. The two most important observations are the difficulties involved in establishing the principle through reason (not self-contradictory to deny it) or through experience (circularity).

11 marks

- (c) Assess Russell's distinction between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description. (25 marks)

Russell introduces the distinction in his attempt to reject the claim that we cannot know anything exists which we do not know. This claim would have serious implications for Russell's belief in the existence of the external world. He thinks it only has plausibility because it fails to distinguish between different types of knowledge. Once this distinction has been established, it is possible to claim that although we cannot know things in one sense, we can in another and thus it is false to say that we do not know them. Knowledge can be of truths or things. Knowledge of things can either be by acquaintance or description. Knowledge by acquaintance is immediate knowledge of, eg sense-data, universals, the self. Knowledge by description is a step removed from direct acquaintance and admits of gradations moving further away from acquaintance (Bismark example). In order to provide knowledge about the world, the description must ultimately be tied to an object of acquaintance, unlike descriptions such as 'the most long lived of men'. Knowledge by description is supposed to be the way we know physical objects. It enables us to pass beyond the data of our immediate private experience. His examples (or similar) of Caesar or Bismark may serve as illustrations.

Critical Discussion

- (1) There might be some discussion of the alleged objects of acquaintance, eg at the time of writing this text, Russell thought we were acquainted with a self. There might be a Humean type response to this claim.
- (2) If all real knowledge must ultimately rest on acquaintance, then we are going to have to know truths of the form: 'such and such sense-data are caused by a physical object'. The problem though concerns how we could ever know truths like this when all we are aware of are sense-data.

- (3) Russell tries to get round the difficulty above by claiming there is an analogy with his Emperor of China example. However, is this a genuine analogy? Russell gives it the appearance of being so by switching to our ordinary way of talking in which we assume we are acquainted with physical objects. The problem is that on Russell's own thesis, matter (including the Emperor of China!), is something which *in principle* cannot be an object of acquaintance. There might be comparative reference to the status of Locke's matter.
- (4) Given the objection in (3), the claim Russell wants to reject should be recast as: we can never truly judge that something with which we *cannot* be acquainted exists. This might be false, but the problem for Russell is to say how he could ever *know* it was.
- (5) There are difficulties with the concept of knowledge by acquaintance. There is a general problem with non-propositional knowledge, namely is it knowledge at all? There are problems with the idea that language is a barrier to securing uniqueness of reference, or that language somehow detracts from the purity of knowledge. There could be some reference to Russell's denotation theory of meaning; logically proper names and the demonstrative pronouns as candidates for the role. It is not expected that there will be an in-depth discussion of these latter issues.
- (6) The direction of a discussion of the points in (5) may lean on the use of concrete examples, eg suppose a machine recorded bare stimuli on a punched tape – would we call this knowledge?
- (7) There could be a problem in setting up the descriptions given the private nature of the objects of acquaintance. How can we know we are referring to the *same* particulars? As Ayer has pointed out it seems necessary for us to do this in order to communicate about, and agree on, our descriptions.
- (8) Is the setting up of descriptions always a straightforward matter? What are the implications of a generally agreed description misidentifying its referent? There might be some (minimal) reference to cluster theories, causal theories or the problems of building in psychological qualifiers as part of the description.

25 marks

[Maximum for question: 50 marks]

6 Text: Ayer's 'Language, Truth and Logic'**Total for this question: 50 marks**

NB The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(i) identify the use of the verifiability criterion; (2 marks)

To test the genuineness of apparent statements of fact. **2 marks**

(ii) briefly explain how Ayer distinguishes genuine propositions from pseudo-propositions; (6 marks)

Propositions (other than tautologies) are genuine or factually significant if and only if they can be verified. We need to know what observations would lead us to accept the proposition as true or reject it as false. When observations are irrelevant to an apparent proposition's truth or falsity, it is a mere pseudo-proposition. It may have emotional significance but no factual significance. Similar remarks apply to questions. **6 marks**

(iii) suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Ayer's verification procedure. (6 marks)

- (1) It fails within its own terms (self-defeating). It cannot be empirically verified, nor is it analytic, therefore it is meaningless in its own terms.
- (2) Attempts to make verificationism analytic fail, eg it is not self-contradictory to deny it, or it is not true by virtue of the meaning of the terms in which it is expressed, or it is not logically futile to suggest counter-examples.
- (3) It works as a theory of factual meaning but this does not imply that factual meaning is the only meaning, or it fails as an exhaustive account of factual meaning. Examples like the hypothesis of the dancing toys or similar might be used. Even if this is not genuinely factual, it can nevertheless be understood. How can Ayer explain this?
- (4) It is not obvious how pseudo-propositions (nonsense) can have emotional significance. Do they not require *some* content to achieve this?
- (5) Even if the procedure is modified, there are difficulties with statements about the past, or fundamental statements of sub-atomic physics, or scientific hypotheses involving dark matter/dark energy.
- (6) Berlin's criticism: given any statement 'P' and an observation statement 'Q', 'Q' follows from 'P' and 'If P then Q' without following from 'If P then Q' alone. This will work no matter what we put in for 'P'. The procedure therefore allows in nonsense.
- (7) Counter-examples might be given to illustrate diversity of meaning. There might be Wittgenstein-type appeals to meaning and usage.
- (8) Ayer's concern is to save science, it is not a philosophically neutral approach.

6 marks

(b) Outline and illustrate Ayer's solution to the problem of *a priori* knowledge. (11 marks)

For Ayer, no propositions concerning matters of fact can be known with certainty or independently of experience. He rejects Mill's view of mathematics as high-level empirical hypotheses. They cannot be falsified; we will not allow this (conventionalism). Any apparent falsity is explained without impairing the truth of the proposition. Such propositions are necessarily true because they are analytic, ie true by virtue of the definitions we have given to the terms. Examples from arithmetic/geometry may illustrate this. Such analytic propositions are tautologies and provide no information regarding matters of fact; they merely unpack definitions. The sense of invention, surprise or discovery in mathematics is explained in terms of definitional complexity. Geometry is not essentially about physical space; all that is required for its truth or validity is self-consistency.

11 marks

(c) Assess Ayer's analysis of moral judgements.

(25 marks)

Ayer's concern is with the correct analysis of actual moral judgements. He rejects traditional subjectivism and utilitarianism through adapting Moore's open question argument. He rejects intuitionism on the ground that intuitions are not self-validating. It seems that all that is left is emotivism. This is a radical version of subjectivism. Moral judgements are neither analytic nor synthetic so, according to the verification principle, they are meaningless. Ayer realises that this in itself will not do – some account has to be given of their use/apparent meaning. They are non-cognitive expressions of feeling. This too is inadequate as it omits their dynamic effect, so Ayer adds that they are calculated to arouse feelings or provoke responses.

Critical Discussion

- (1) Describing moral judgements as expressions of feeling fails to distinguish them from factual judgements, eg 'I am bored', 'I was horrified'. Adding that they are non-assertoric and provoke others to action does not entirely remove the problem, eg the military command 'charge!'
- (2) Is there such a radical distinction between the factual and the evaluative? Statements like 'it is dainty', 'it is quaint' are evaluative but also carry some descriptive load as they could not be applied to just anything.
- (3) There could be a discussion of the model of feeling Ayer is working with. John Wisdom's criticism might be used, eg 'I could never forgive him' logically implies a factual belief, where as 'ugh!' does not. Ayer appears to be assimilating them.
- (4) Ayer accepts that there cannot be disagreement on moral issues. This is not satisfactory. Not all moral disputes reduce to factual ones. There are also cases where your moral position can determine what counts as a fact – the abortion debate is a possible case. It is also possible to change one's views morally without any corresponding change in the facts.
- (5) Ayer's response to the moral disagreement issue above is self-contradictory: not all disagreements are expressible in the form of a contradiction, all disagreements are factual. But all factual disagreements *are* expressible in the form of a contradiction. Ayer has given the game away.

- (6) Ayer's lack of realistic examples lends specious plausibility to his thesis. Ross had made the point that Ayer uses substitutes for such judgements. How would the thesis work with eg expressions of remorse?
- (7) There may be some discussion of just how emotive our moral vocabulary is. It might be argued that the traditional vocabulary 'good', 'bad', etc is not best suited for arousing actions or feelings.
- (8) If the primary function of moral judgements is to express individual feeling, how do we account for a general consensus on some moral issues? Is it a coincidence of individual reactions, or do we need to appeal to something in addition to the reactions?
- (9) We can engage in rational discussion of moral issues. We can defend or justify our moral views. Even ultimate disagreement does not have to result in abuse.
- (10) There might be criticism of Ayer's use of the open question argument, eg it excludes the possibility of giving any definitions.
- (11) Even when all the facts of a matter have been agreed, there can be real disagreement on what ought to be done. It is hard to see how this is possible on Ayer's analysis, given that feelings do not contradict each other.

25 marks

[Maximum for question: 50 marks]