

General Certificate of Education
June 2008
Advanced Level Examination



PHILOSOPHY
Unit 5 Texts

PLY5

Wednesday 18 June 2008 1.30 pm to 2.30 pm

For this paper you must have:

- an 8-page answer book.

Time allowed: 1 hour

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is PLY5.
- Answer **one** question.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 50.
- The marks for part questions are shown in brackets.
- You will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Answer **one** question.

Total for this question: 50 marks

1 *Text: Aristotle's 'Nicomachean Ethics'*

Study the following extract and then answer **all** parts of Question 1.

If, then, every science¹ performs its function well only when it observes the mean and refers its products to it (which is why it is customary to say of well-executed works that nothing can be added to them or taken away, the implication being that excess and deficiency alike destroy perfection, while the mean preserves it) – if good craftsmen, as we hold, work with the mean in view; and if virtue, like nature, is more exact and more efficient than any art, it follows that virtue aims to hit the mean. By virtue I mean moral virtue since it is this that is concerned with feelings and actions, and these involve excess, deficiency and a mean. It is possible, for example, to feel fear, confidence, desire, anger, pity, and pleasure and pain generally, too much or too little; and both of these are wrong. But to have these feelings at the right times on the right grounds towards the right people for the right motive and in the right way is to feel them to an intermediate, that is to the best, degree; and this is the mark of virtue. Similarly there are excess and deficiency and a mean in the case of actions. But it is in the field of actions and feelings that virtue operates; and in them excess and deficiency are failings, whereas the mean is praised and recognized as a success: and these are both marks of virtue. Virtue, then, is a mean condition, inasmuch as it aims at hitting the mean.

¹He means practical science, as is evident from the context.

Question 1

- (a) With close reference to the extract above:
- (i) identify the conditions of every science performing its function well; (2 marks)
 - (ii) briefly explain why goodness is said to hit the mean; (6 marks)
 - (iii) suggest and briefly develop **one** criticism of the Doctrine of the Mean. (6 marks)
- (b) Explain and illustrate Aristotle's concept of contemplation. (11 marks)
- (c) Assess Aristotle's use of 'function' in his ethical theory. (25 marks)

Total for this question: 50 marks

2 Text: Hume's 'An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding'

Study the following extract and then answer **all** parts of Question 2.

But to proceed in this reconciling project with regard to the question of liberty and necessity; the most contentious question, of metaphysics, the most contentious science; it will not require many words to prove, that all mankind have ever agreed in the doctrine of liberty as well as in that of necessity, and that the whole dispute, in this respect also, has been hitherto merely verbal. For what is meant by *liberty*, when applied to voluntary actions? We cannot surely mean, that actions have so little connexion with motives, inclinations, and circumstances, that one does not follow with a certain degree of uniformity from the other, and that one affords no inference by which we can conclude the existence of the other. For these are plain and acknowledged matters of fact. By *liberty*, then, we can only mean *a power of acting or not acting, according to the determinations of the will*; that is, if we choose to remain at rest, we may; if we choose to move, we also may. Now this hypothetical liberty is universally allowed to belong to every one, who is not a prisoner and in chains. Here then is no subject of dispute.

Whatever definition we may give of *liberty*, we should be careful to observe two requisite circumstances; *first*, that it be consistent with plain matter of fact; *secondly*, that it be consistent with itself. If we observe these circumstances, and render our definition intelligible, I am persuaded that all mankind will be found of one opinion with regard to it.

Question 2

- (a) With close reference to the extract above:
- (i) identify what Hume is reconciling; (2 marks)
 - (ii) outline Hume's account of liberty; (6 marks)
 - (iii) suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Hume's definition of 'liberty'. (6 marks)
- (b) Explain and illustrate Hume's distinction between ideas and impressions. (11 marks)
- (c) Assess Hume's account of the origin of the idea of necessary connection. (25 marks)

Turn over for the next question

Turn over ►

Total for this question: 50 marks

3 *Text: Mill's 'On Liberty'*

Study the following extract and then answer **all** parts of Question 3.

He who lets the world, or his own portion of it, choose his plan of life for him has no need of any other faculty than the ape-like one of imitation. He who chooses his plan for himself employs all his faculties. He must use observation to see, reasoning and judgement to foresee, activity to gather materials for decision, discrimination to decide, and when he has decided, firmness and self-control to hold to his deliberate decision. And these qualities he requires and exercises exactly in proportion as the part of his conduct which he determines according to his own judgement and feelings is a large one. It is possible that he might be guided in some good path, and kept out of harm's way, without any of these things. But what will be his comparative worth as a human being? It really is of importance, not only what men do, but also what manner of men they are that do it. Among the works of man which human life is rightly employed in perfecting and beautifying, the first in importance surely is man himself. Supposing it were possible to get houses built, corn grown, battles fought, causes tried, and even churches erected and prayers said by machinery – by automatons in human form – it would be a considerable loss to exchange for these automatons even the men and women who at present inhabit the more civilized parts of the world, and who assuredly are but starved specimens of what nature can and will produce. Human nature is not a machine to be built after a model, and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing.

Question 3

- (a) With close reference to the extract above:
- (i) identify the characteristic of those who choose their own life plan; *(2 marks)*
 - (ii) outline Mill's case for encouraging individual development; *(6 marks)*
 - (iii) suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Mill's individualism. *(6 marks)*
- (b) Explain any **three** of Mill's arguments in support of free discussion. *(11 marks)*
- (c) Assess whether Mill's Harm Principle is socially and politically effective. *(25 marks)*

Total for this question: 50 marks

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

Study the following extract and then answer **all** parts of Question 4.

To refrain from injuring, abusing, or exploiting one another; to equate another person's will with our own: in a certain crude sense this can develop into good manners between individuals, if the preconditions are in place (that is, if the individuals have truly similar strength and standards and if they are united within one single social body). But if we were to try to take this principle further and possibly even make it the *basic principle of society*, it would immediately be revealed for what it is: a will to *deny* life, a principle for dissolution and decline. We must think through the reasons for this and resist all sentimental frailty: life itself *in its essence* means appropriating, injuring, overpowering those who are foreign and weaker; oppression, harshness, forcing one's own forms on others, incorporation, and at the very least, at the very mildest, exploitation – but why should we keep using this kind of language, that has from time immemorial been infused with a slanderous intent? Even that social body whose individuals, as we have just assumed above, treat one another as equals (this happens in every healthy aristocracy) must itself, if the body is vital and not moribund, do to other bodies everything that the individuals within it refrain from doing to one another: it will have to be the will to power incarnate, it will want to grow, to reach out around itself, pull towards itself, gain the upper hand – not out of some morality or immorality, but because it is *alive*, and because life simply *is* the will to power. This, however, more than anything else, is what the common European consciousness resists learning; people everywhere are rhapsodizing, even under the guise of science, about future social conditions that will have lost their 'exploitative character' – to my ear that sounds as if they were promising to invent a life form that would refrain from all organic functions. 'Exploitation' is not part of a decadent or imperfect, primitive society: it is part of the *fundamental nature* of living things, as its fundamental organic function; it is a consequence of the true will to power, which is simply the will to life.

Assuming that this is innovative as theory – as reality it is the *original fact* of all history: let us at least be this honest with ourselves!

Question 4

- (a) With close reference to the extract above:
- (i) identify **two** features said to belong to the essence of life; (2 marks)
 - (ii) briefly describe how Nietzsche regards our social or moral principles; (6 marks)
 - (iii) suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Nietzsche's position on exploitation. (6 marks)
- (b) Outline and illustrate Nietzsche's account of 'noble values'. (11 marks)
- (c) Assess whether Nietzsche was right to regard past philosophy as an expression of prejudice. (25 marks)

Turn over ►

Total for this question: 50 marks

5 Text: Russell's 'The Problems of Philosophy'

Study the following extract and then answer **all** parts of Question 5.

In order to understand his argument, it is necessary to understand his [Berkeley's] use of the word 'idea'. He gives the name 'idea' to anything which is *immediately* known, as, for example, sense-data are known. Thus a particular colour which we see is an idea; so is a voice which we hear, and so on. But the term is not wholly confined to sense-data. There will also be things remembered or imagined, for with such things also we have immediate acquaintance at the moment of remembering or imagining. All such immediate data he calls 'ideas'.

He then proceeds to consider common objects, such as a tree, for instance. He shows that all we know immediately when we 'perceive' the tree consists of ideas in his sense of the word, and he argues that there is not the slightest ground for supposing that there is anything real about the tree except what is perceived. Its being, he says, consists in being perceived: in the Latin of the schoolmen its '*esse*' is '*percipi*'. He fully admits that the tree must continue to exist even when we shut our eyes or when no human being is near it. But this continued existence, he says, is due to the fact that God continues to perceive it; the 'real' tree, which corresponds to what we called the physical object, consists of ideas in the mind of God, ideas more or less like those we have when we see the tree, but differing in the fact that they are permanent in God's mind so long as the tree continues to exist. All our perceptions, according to him, consist in a partial participation in God's perceptions, and it is because of this participation that different people see more or less the same tree. Thus apart from minds and their ideas there is nothing in the world, nor is it possible that anything else should ever be known, since whatever is known is necessarily an idea.

Question 5

- (a) With close reference to the extract above:
- (i) identify what Berkeley applies the term 'idea' to; (2 marks)
 - (ii) briefly describe Russell's account of Berkeley's position; (6 marks)
 - (iii) suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Russell's treatment of Berkeley's idealism. (6 marks)
- (b) Explain and illustrate Russell's solution to the problem of *a priori* knowledge. (11 marks)
- (c) Assess whether Russell was right in distinguishing sense-data from physical objects. (25 marks)

Total for this question: 50 marks

6 *Text: Ayer's 'Language, Truth and Logic'*

Study the following extract and then answer **all** parts of Question 6.

The power of logic and mathematics to surprise us depends, like their usefulness, on the limitations of our reason. A being whose intellect was infinitely powerful would take no interest in logic and mathematics. For he would be able to see at a glance everything that his definitions implied, and, accordingly, could never learn anything from logical inference which he was not fully conscious of already. But our intellects are not of this order. It is only a minute proportion of the consequences of our definitions that we are able to detect at a glance. Even so simple a tautology as ' $91 \times 79 = 7189$ ' is beyond the scope of our immediate apprehension. To assure ourselves that ' 7189 ' is synonymous with ' 91×79 ' we have to resort to calculation, which is simply a process of tautological transformation – that is, a process by which we change the form of expressions without altering their significance. The multiplication tables are rules for carrying out this process in arithmetic, just as the laws of logic are rules for the tautological transformation of sentences expressed in logical symbolism or in ordinary language. As the process of calculation is carried out more or less mechanically, it is easy for us to make a slip and so unwittingly contradict ourselves. And this accounts for the existence of logical and mathematical 'falsehoods', which otherwise might appear paradoxical. Clearly the risk of error in logical reasoning is proportionate to the length and the complexity of the process of calculation. And in the same way, the more complex an analytic proposition is, the more chance it has of interesting and surprising us.

It is easy to see that the danger of error in logical reasoning can be minimized by the introduction of symbolic devices, which enable us to express highly complex tautologies in a conveniently simple form. And this gives us an opportunity for the exercise of invention in the pursuit of logical inquiries. For a well-chosen definition will call our attention to analytic truths, which would otherwise have escaped us. And the framing of definitions which are useful and fruitful may well be regarded as a creative act.

Question 6

- (a) With close reference to the extract above:
- (i) identify the reason why an infinitely powerful intellect would take no interest in mathematics; *(2 marks)*
 - (ii) briefly describe Ayer's account of mathematics and logic; *(6 marks)*
 - (iii) suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Ayer's position on mathematical knowledge. *(6 marks)*
- (b) Explain and illustrate Ayer's solution to the problem of perception. *(11 marks)*
- (c) Assess whether Ayer's verification principle achieves its purpose. *(25 marks)*

END OF QUESTIONS

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