

PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

9774/02

Paper 2 Key Texts and Topics in Philosophy and Theology 1

May/June 2012

2 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.

Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Choose **one** of Topics 1 to 4.

Answer **two** questions.

You must answer **both** parts of the question in Section A and **one** question from Section B for the Topic you have chosen.

You should divide your time equally between the questions you attempt.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.



This document consists of **5** printed pages and **3** blank pages.



Choose **one** of Topics 1 to 4.

Answer **two** questions.

You must answer **both** parts of the question in Section A and **one** question from Section B for the Topic you have chosen.

You should divide your time equally between the questions you attempt.

Topic 1 Epistemology

Answer Question 1 **and** either Question 2 **or** Question 3.

Section A

[Philonous to Hylas] You indeed said the reality of sensible things consisted in an *absolute existence* out of the minds of spirits or distinct from their being perceived. And, pursuant to this notion of reality, you are obliged to deny sensible things any real existence, that is, according to your own definition, you profess yourself a *sceptic*. But I neither said nor thought the reality of sensible things was to be defined after that manner. To me it is evident, for the reasons you allow of, that sensible things cannot exist otherwise than in a mind or spirit. From this I conclude, not that they have no real existence, but that, seeing they do not depend on my thought, and have an existence distinct from being perceived by me, *there must be some other mind in which they exist*. As sure, therefore, as the sensible world really exists, so sure is there an infinite omnipresent Spirit who contains and supports it.

[Extract from **George Berkeley**: *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous in Opposition to Sceptics and Atheists*: Cahn, 745]

- 1 (a) Explain Berkeley's use of the idea of God in the *Dialogues*. [10]
 (b) Critically assess Berkeley's idealism in the *Dialogues*. [15]

Section B

- 2 Examine critically Descartes' use of philosophical doubt in his search for a secure foundation for knowledge. [25]

OR

- 3 Critically assess reliabilism. [25]

Topic 2 Philosophical and Theological Language

Answer Question 4 **and** either Question 5 **or** Question 6.

Section A

[The Parable of the Celestial City]

Two men are travelling together along a road. One of them believes that it leads to a Celestial City, the other that it leads nowhere; but since this is the only road there is, both must travel it. Neither has been this way before, and therefore neither is able to say what they will find around each next corner. During their journey they meet both with moments of refreshment and delight, and with moments of hardship and danger. All the time one of them thinks of his journey as a pilgrimage to the Celestial City and interprets the pleasant parts as encouragements and the obstacles as trials of his purpose and lessons in endurance, prepared by the king of that city and designed to make of him a worthy citizen of the place when at last he arrives there. The other, however, believes none of this and sees their journey as an unavoidable and aimless ramble. Since he has no choice in the matter, he enjoys the good and endures the bad. But for him there is no Celestial City to be reached, no all-encompassing purpose ordaining their journey; only the road itself and the luck of the road in good weather and in bad.

During the course of the journey the issue between them is not an experimental one. They do not entertain different expectations about the coming details of the road, but only about its ultimate destination. And yet when they do turn the last corner it will be apparent that one of them has been right all the time and the other wrong. Thus although the issue between them has not been experimental, it has nevertheless from the start been a real issue. They have not merely felt differently about the road; for one was feeling appropriately and the other inappropriately in relation to the actual state of affairs. Their opposed interpretations of the road constituted genuinely rival assertions, although assertions whose assertion-status has the peculiar characteristic of being guaranteed retrospectively by a future crux.

[Extract from **Basil Mitchell**: *The Philosophy of Religion*: III: 'Theology and Verification.'
(John Hick): 59–60]

- 4 (a) With reference to the *Parable of the Celestial City*, explain the reasoning behind Hick's claim that the existence of God is verifiable eschatologically (i.e. after death). [10]
- (b) Evaluate Hick's further claim that resurrection of the body is logically possible. [15]

Section B

- 5 Examine critically responses to the challenge of the falsification principle. [25]

OR

- 6 Critically examine the use of myth, symbol and analogy to express human understanding of God. [25]

Topic 3 Philosophy of Religion

Answer Question 7 **and** either Question 8 **or** Question 9.

Section A

Within the Augustinian tradition, which has dominated the thought of Western Christendom since the fifth century, the doctrine of a fearful and calamitous fall of man long ago in the 'dark backward and abysm of time', and of a subsequent participation by all men in the deadly entail of sin, is, as we have seen, deeply entrenched. According to this conception in its developed form, man was created finitely perfect, but in his freedom he rebelled against God and has existed ever since under the righteous wrath and just condemnation of his Maker. For the descendants of Adam and Eve stand in a corporate unity and continuity of life with the primal pair and have inherited both their guilt and a corrupted and sin-prone nature. We are accordingly born as sinners, and endowed with a nature that is bound to lead us daily into further sin; and it is only by God's free, and to us incomprehensible, grace that some (but not all) are eventually to be saved.

[Extract from **John Hick**: *Evil and the God of Love*: 201]

- 7 (a) Explain Hick's reasons for concluding that the Augustinian theodicy fails to resolve the problem of evil. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Hick's soul-making theodicy. [15]

Section B

- 8 Critically assess the claim that the anthropic principle is the strongest form of the design argument. [25]

OR

- 9 Examine critically the implications of psychological understandings of religious belief. [25]

Topic 4 New Testament: The Four Gospels

Answer Question 10 **and** either Question 11 **or** Question 12.

Section A

13 Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. ¹⁵When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, 'This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.' ¹⁶Jesus said to them, 'They need not go away; you give them something to eat.' ¹⁷They replied, 'We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.' ¹⁸And he said, 'Bring them here to me.' ¹⁹Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. ²⁰And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. ²¹And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

[Matt 14: 13–21]

- 10 (a)** Examine different interpretations of this miracle. [10]
- (b)** 'Jesus' miracles have no basis in fact.' Evaluate this claim. [15]

Section B

- 11** Critically examine Jesus' relationship with the Pharisees and Sadducees. [25]

OR

- 12** Examine critically the historicity and interpretation of the arrest and trial narratives. [25]

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Question 4	© Basil Mitchell; <i>The Philosophy of Religion</i> ; Oxford University Press; 1971.
Question 7	© John Hick; <i>Evil and the God of Love</i> , Revised Ed; Macmillan; 1966.
Question 10	© New Revised Standard Version of the Bible; Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA; 1989.

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