

BA EXAMINATION 2003

for Internal Students

This paper is also taken by Combined Studies Students

PHILOSOPHY4. Greek Philosophy from the beginnings to Aristotle

Wednesday, May 14th, 2003, 10.00 am - 1.00 pm.

Answer THREE questions, at least TWO from SECTION B. Avoid overlap in your answers.

SECTION A

1. Could Heraclitus reasonably be described as a materialist monist?
2. What does Parmenides mean by the claim that one cannot know or say what is not? Does he have any convincing argument for this claim?
3. Give a critical assessment of Zeno's paradoxes of motion.
4. EITHER (a) How far does Empedocles' cosmic system solve the problems posed for cosmology by Parmenides?
OR (b) Evaluate Empedocles' view that love and strife interact to shape the world.
5. How does Anaxagoras reconcile the possibility of change with the view that nothing comes to be or perishes?
6. 'Nothing happens at random, but everything from reason and by necessity' (Leucippus). Give a critical assessment of the ancient atomists' approach to causation.

SECTION B

7. EITHER (a) Can a case be made for describing Socrates as a sophist?
OR (b) Can Socrates be a reliable source of truth if he is sincere in claiming to know nothing?
8. According to Plato, the best argument for the recollection theory is 'that when people are asked questions, providing the questioning is done well, they will come out with all the right answers. But if knowledge and a correct view of the matter were not present

in them, they would not be able to do this' (*Phaedo*, 73a-b). Is Plato right to think that this argument establishes the recollection theory?

9. EITHER (a) What problems does Plato see with regard to the possibility of akrasia (weakness of will)? Does he overcome them?
OR (b) Expound and assess any ONE of Plato's arguments for the immortality of the soul.
10. EITHER (a) What is the best way of understanding the particular's participation in a Form?
OR (b) Would Plato be right to reject all the criticisms of the theory of Forms set out at the start of the *Parmenides*?
11. EITHER (a) In the *Theaetetus*, what is the relationship between the following theses: (T) 'Knowledge is Perception'; (P) 'Man is the measure of all things: of those that are, that they are, and of those that are not, that they are not'; (H) 'Nothing ever is, but is only becoming'?
OR (b) In the *Theaetetus*, what are the advantages and disadvantages of the Wax Tablet and Aviary in explaining false judgment?
12. Give a critical analysis of the following passage:

STRANGER: Well then, should we call Difference a fifth? Or should we take it and Being to be two names for a single Kind?

THEÆTETUS: Perhaps we should.

STR: But I think you agree that of the things that are, some are spoken of just in themselves and others always with reference to other things.

THT: Of course.

STR: But what is different is always different from something different, isn't it?

THT: Yes.

STR: And that would not be so if Being and Difference were not totally distinct. If Difference partook of both of these two forms, as Being does, then we should sometimes get something different that was not different from something different; but as it is we find that whatever is different is necessarily different from something different.

THT: That is true.

STR: Then we must admit that Difference is a fifth among the Forms that we have selected. (Plato, *Sophist* 255c-d)

13. What are Aristotelian substances?
14. Does Aristotle think that the rain falls in order to make the crops grow?
15. Explain and evaluate Aristotle's definition of EITHER change OR time OR place.
16. How, and how successfully, does Aristotle argue for the existence of a first source of change which is itself unchanged?

17. Does Aristotle think that the soul is the actuality of the body in the way that a sailor is in a ship? Why, or why not?

18. EITHER (a) According to Aristotle, it is not eyes that see, but a man who sees his eyes. How well does Aristotle's analysis of perception bear this out?

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OR (b) 'Now, if thinking is like perceiving, it will consist in being affected in some way by the object of thought or something else of this kind. The thinking part of the soul must therefore be unaffected, but capable of receiving the form, and potentially such as it, although not identical to it; and as that which is capable of perceiving is to the objects of perception, so must the intellect be related to the objects of thought' (Aristotle, *De Anima* 429a13-18). On Aristotle's view, how similar is thinking to perceiving? What problems are raised by the analogy?

19. Give a critical analysis of the following passage:

Now, we have said earlier that it is not possible to understand through demonstration if we are not aware of the primitive, immediate principles. But as to knowledge of the immediates, one might puzzle whether it is the same or not the same — whether there is understanding of each, or rather understanding of the one and some other kind of thing of the other — and also whether the states are not present in us but come about in us, or whether they are present in us but escape notice.

Well, if we have them, it is absurd; for it results that we have pieces of knowledge more precise than demonstration and yet this escapes notice. But if we get them without having them earlier, how might we become familiar with them and learn them from no pre-existing knowledge? For that is impossible, as we said in the case of demonstration too. It is evidently impossible, then, both for us to have them and for them to come about in us when we are ignorant and have no such state at all. Necessarily, therefore, we have some capacity, but do not have one of a type which will be more valuable than these in respect of precision. (Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* II.19)

20. Does Aristotle believe that there can be true statements about what will happen in the future?

END OF PAPER