



MARKSCHEME

November 2012

PHILOSOPHY

Higher Level and Standard Level

Paper 2

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Note to examiners

This markscheme outlines what members of the paper setting team had in mind when they devised the questions. The topics listed in the bullet points indicate possible areas candidates might cover in their answers. They are not compulsory points and not necessarily the best possible points. They are only a framework to help examiners in their assessment. Examiners should be responsive to any other valid points or any other valid approaches.

Using the assessment criteria

Candidates at both Higher Level and Standard Level answer **one** question on the prescribed texts.

Answers are assessed according to the assessment criteria set out below.

Paper 2 assessment criteria**A Expression**

- Has the student presented ideas in an organized way?
- How clear and precise is the language used by the student?
- To what extent is the language appropriate to philosophy?
- To what extent has the student understood the author’s use of specific terminology?

Achievement Level	Descriptor
0	The student has not reached level 1.
1	The student expresses some basic ideas but it is not clear what the answer is trying to convey. The use of language is not appropriate to philosophy.
2	The student presents some ideas in an organized way. There is some clarity of expression but the answer cannot always be followed. The use of language is not always appropriate to philosophy. The student shows some understanding of the author’s use of specific terminology but only in a limited way.
3	The student presents ideas in an organized way and the answer can be easily followed. The use of language is appropriate to philosophy and the author’s use of specific terminology is satisfactorily understood.
4	The student presents ideas in an organized and coherent way and insights are clearly articulated. The use of language is effective and appropriate to philosophy. The student shows a clear understanding and use of the author’s specific terminology.
5	The student presents ideas in an organized, coherent and incisive way, insights are clearly articulated and the answer is focused and sustained. The use of language is precise and appropriate to philosophy. The student shows an assured understanding and use of the author’s specific terminology.

B Knowledge and understanding of the text

- How well does the student know the text?
- To what extent has the student understood the author’s ideas, arguments and key concepts?

Achievement Level	Descriptor
0	The student has not reached level 1.
1	The student demonstrates a superficial knowledge of the text and there is only a basic understanding of the author’s ideas, arguments and key concepts.
2	The student demonstrates some knowledge of the text, with a limited understanding of the author’s ideas, arguments and key concepts.
3	The student demonstrates satisfactory knowledge of the text and the author’s ideas, arguments and key concepts are satisfactorily understood. There is some insight into the author’s arguments.
4	The student demonstrates a good knowledge of the text and the author’s ideas, arguments and key concepts are clearly understood. The student is able to show an understanding of some of the more difficult or subtle points of the author’s arguments.
5	The student demonstrates that the text has been thoroughly and carefully read. The student shows an in-depth understanding of the author’s arguments, with a close attention to detail.

C Identification and analysis of relevant material

- How well has the student understood the specific demands of the question?
- To what extent does the student identify and analyse relevant supporting material?
- How effectively does the student analyse the supporting material, examples and counter-arguments?

Achievement Level	Descriptor
0	The student has not reached level 1.
1–2	The student shows little understanding of the specific demands of the question and identifies relevant supporting material in only a limited way. There is little analysis and few or no examples are given.
3–4	The student shows some understanding of the specific demands of the question and identifies and analyses some relevant supporting material. Some appropriate examples are used.
5–6	The student shows a satisfactory understanding of the specific demands of the question and identifies supporting material that is nearly always relevant. There is a satisfactory analysis of this material. Examples are appropriate and give some support to the argument.
7–8	The student shows an effective understanding of the specific demands of the question and identifies relevant supporting material that is analysed in a sound and thoughtful way. Examples are appropriate in their support of the overall argument. Some counter-arguments are identified.
9–10	The student shows an in-depth understanding of the specific demands of the question and identifies supporting material that is always relevant. The implications of this material are analysed in detail. Examples are well chosen and compelling in their support of the overall argument. Counter-arguments are identified and analysed in a convincing way.

D Development and evaluation

- Does the student develop the argument in a coherent way?
- How well does the student develop and evaluate the ideas and arguments of the text?
- To what extent does the student express a relevant personal response?

Achievement Level	Descriptor
0	The student has not reached level 1.
1–2	The student develops ideas and arguments in a basic way and there is little or no evaluation of the text.
3–4	The student develops some ideas and arguments but the development is simple, or is asserted without reference to the text. There may be some basic evaluation of the ideas and arguments of the text but it is not developed.
5–6	The student develops ideas and arguments in a satisfactory way and evaluates them to some extent. A limited critique of the ideas and arguments of the text is offered. There is some evidence of a relevant personal response.
7–8	The student develops ideas and arguments from a consistently held perspective, in close response to the ideas and arguments of the text. Evaluation is thoughtful and convincing and the student offers a critique of the text that goes beyond a statement of opinion or belief. There is good evidence of a relevant personal response.
9–10	The student develops ideas and arguments in an incisive and coherent way in detailed response to the text. Evaluation is compelling or subtle, and convincing, and the student offers a critique of the text that shows strong evidence of a relevant personal response. The student shows an ability to challenge the assumptions made by the author and explores different approaches to the text.

Bhagavad Gita

1. “That calm man who is the same in pain and pleasure, whom these cannot disturb, alone is able, O great amongst men, to attain to immortality.” Discuss and evaluate.

This question invites a discussion and evaluation of a central theme in the *Bhagavad Gita*, that of permanence and has both metaphysical and ethical possibilities to be explored.

Key Points

- Lord Krishna declares to Arjuna over the contemplation at the battlefield of the calamity of death: “It is not that I have never existed, nor thou, nor these kings. Nor is it that we shall cease to exist in the future”
- In addition to personal immortality there is also the permanence of *Prakriti* – the primal force and the essence of nature: “You must understand that both *Prakriti* and *Brahman* ... are without beginning. All evolution and all the *gunas* proceed from *Prakriti*”
- The permanence of both the activity of, and the materials of, creation linking to immortality; human nature as spirit is permanent
- The permanence of *atman*
- The human condition as characterized by a relentless striving which involves constant change
- The analogy comparing the human body to clothes which get cast off in the process of ageing and change
- Arjuna’s sorrow when confronted with his attachment to the physical body and his physical nature
- The body as the centre of illusion but also the focal point of liberation if the correct denial and renunciation is achieved
- Divine-centred living involves a dispassionate permanence of commitment and goal
- Calm detachment as the sign of permanence and immortality

Discussion

- Can you perform ordinary actions and remain free?
- Renunciation and permanence
- Is life rendered more meaningful in the light of permanence?
- Can a modern scientific outlook be compatible with notions of spiritual permanence and physical impermanence?
- Is outer impermanence and inner permanence a consistent view of human nature?
- The human body is not real because of its impermanence; is this persuasive?
- Liberation as the expression of the highest goal
- How, if at all, does the perspective on permanence in the text impact upon Western perspectives?

2. Evaluate the view that the *Bhagavad Gita* encourages the reader to approve of war.

This question invites an evaluation of the message of the *Bhagavad Gita* in the matter of war and peace, given the setting of the text at the battlefield.

Key Points

- The setting of the text at the battlefield where Arjuna faces his cousins in war
- War is a powerful allegory in the text; is this allegory an approval of war or the use of a metaphor for a different teaching about human life?
- Possible allegorical interpretations of Krishna, Arjuna and Arjuna's chariot
- War as inner struggle vs. war as outer struggle against forces that deny liberation and the possibility of enlightenment
- The just war and conditions of the battle
- War and attachment; battle as indicating the longevity of suffering and the goal to achieve liberation
- Yoga as a striving for liberation and a metaphor for battle in creating a strenuous physical challenge
- The permanence of *atman* giving succour to the fear of killing
- Choice, freedom and determinism
- War as properly waged between soldiers, not an indiscriminate battle

Discussion

- Are allegorical interpretations of the outer state of war depicting an inner spiritual struggle justified?
- Scholarly dispute over allegorical interpretations; how influential is the context of the commentator on interpretations of the text in the modern day?
- The denial of physical suffering; is this convincing in the modern world?
- The body as "appearance"; does this justify extremist physical, or terrorist, action?
- Justifications for war and the issue of incitement
- The issue of freedom of will given the inevitability of the battle Arjuna faces

Confucius: *The Analects*

3. To what extent do the tripartite practices of government – filial piety, humaneness, ritual – lead to successful rule?

This question asks for an assessment of the three basic guiding principles of government and the consequences of practising these principles.

Key Points

- The three practices of government; filiality, humaneness, ritual
- The contrast with kingship which is concerned with leadership, whereas government is concerned with the infrastructure of the state and its daily functions, but both being guided by moral values
- The stress on particular moral values guiding governmental practice; peace, egalitarianism, respect and dignity
- Filiality; extending the notion of a caring family to the nurturing of the state and its citizens that the government should practise
- Humaneness; understanding oneself as a leader, developing compassion, trust, respect and kindness
- Ritual; the most important practice, vaguely defined as consistency of action and practice, and known expectations of formal honoured responses
- With the three parts functioning in balance, a harmonious society exists without corruption, but with liberality, and an absence of violence, envy and greed
- The aim of government should be the amelioration of the human condition

Discussion

- How far is the enactment of the three practices an abstract idealized form of government?
- Does Confucius's notion of good government rest solely on his belief that humans are essentially good?
- Is there a gap between the ritual of government and its everyday enactment?
- Confucius's commentary speaks perhaps of his own experience. Do his ideas have something to say to modern governments?
- Do contemporary governments understand some or all of these governmental practices?
- Can supervision and leadership styles within a family be effectively extended to a state?
- Might there be a gap between governmental officials and their intra-government practice, and their treatment of people?
- Is it possible for the executive, the king, to be separate from the government?
- Is it really necessary, as Confucius suggests, for the civil servants to be at peace with themselves, and have higher levels of self-knowledge? Might they then be above the common people?
- Does a morally good government produce a morally good society?
- Contrasts might be made with Western commentaries on the function and responsibility of government, *e.g.* Locke or Machiavelli
- Are the inequalities between the genders that are often features of families likely also to be present within governments if governments are modelled on families?

4. To what extent should one follow Confucius’s requirement to devote oneself “earnestly to one’s duty to humanity”?

This question asks for an assessment of whether the main responsibility of a human is a duty toward other humans.

Key Points

- The main function of a human is to serve and improve the life of his or her fellows
- Duty is to serve and is the main purpose of human existence
- Self-knowledge is essential
- The development of one’s self inevitably leads to the development of the selves of others
- Self-profit becomes the profit of others and the establishment of self-interested altruism
- This commitment of one’s self to others is a fundamental characteristic of the gentleman; the ideal man with the focus on *ren*, humaneness
- Humans need to live within the “Mandate from Heaven” which is to live in harmony with others
- The goal of life is to live the moral life; selfless and devoted to others
- Humans can redirect “self-interest” and “selfishness” by education, self-effort and self-reflection
- The “Silver Rule” (“Do not do to others what you would not like them to do to you”) can be enacted in a structure created by *li* (propriety, reverence, politeness, ritual) therefore making *Jen* (goodness and benevolence) a workable moral system
- When all men are “gentlemen” then a perfect moral society of harmony and justice will prevail. Is there a gender bias in Confucius’s account?

Discussion

- To what extent is Confucius naïve in his view that being selfless is a feature of human nature?
- Is duty the main purpose of life? Should it be?
- Could a society where all humans work and strive to benefit each other ever come about?
- Is the basic principle of Confucius’s system utilitarian?
- By being so human-centred does this approach to ethical practices leave no room for spiritual aspects of human interaction?
- In many societies concern about one’s place in the universe and what is beyond death drives actions; does Confucius’s principle of mutuality and collective support allow for this?
- How compatible is the Confucian idea of duty with the exploitation by humans of each other?
- Parallels with other religious traditions

Lao Tzu: *Tao Te Ching*

5. Evaluate the claim that nature might be equated to the *Tao*, is divine and becomes an object of reverence, being worthy of the most careful attention.

This question offers an opportunity to evaluate the multi-faceted notion of the *Tao* by means of a critical evaluation of its possible equation to nature.

Key Points

- Nature is far more than what we immediately see; it is a deeper dimension of reality, to a good extent it might be identified with the *Tao* as the origin of the world
- *Tao* means both to lead, and to be led along, a path
- *Tao* as in some sense present in, or informing, all there is
- The *Tao* is beyond all finite determinations that characterize the world of appearances; however, it appears indirectly by means of various polarities (softness *vs.* hardness, femininity *vs.* masculinity *etc.*)
- *Tao* is often taken to be the familiar search for the one behind the many. However, the *Tao* suggests that there is no Being behind the beings. There are only beings and they as a whole are *Tao*
- *Tao* is both “what is” (things and their attributes) and “how things are” (actions and their modalities). There are no clear lines between things and events, and hence we cannot separate “the Way” as what from “the Way” as how
- To realize this unity in diversity it is necessary to develop a primordial level of human consciousness which is characterized by being inactive, undifferentiated, and not ruled by conceptual thought

Discussion

- The text presents a set of overlapping images rather than a system of doctrines, and there is no very explicit indication as to how they relate to each other
- Interpretations of this facet of the *Tao Te Ching's* thought vary widely, and at present nothing can be regarded as settled
- Philosophically inclined modern interpreters have tended to construe this area of Taoist thought on the model of Western metaphysics. On this view, teachings about *Tao* constitute an objective transcendent foundation of the worldview taught by the *Tao Te Ching* as a whole
- The belief in the divine dimension of nature has stimulated Chinese aesthetics and the scientific study of nature
- Is it possible to apply to human conduct regarding nature the same teachings that are indicated with regard to the *Tao*?
- Can there be consciousness without conceptualization?

6. Explain and discuss the political implications of the *Tao Te Ching*.

This question invites an explanation and discussion of the implications for political life of the central idea of the *Tao* and the explicit ideas regarding ruling and social life.

Key Points

- *Tao*, as the highest reality, gives to whomever possesses it the spiritual status of “norm for the world”; he/she takes over this religious role which tradition had assigned to the emperor
- When such a person attained a position in government, the *Tao* he possessed would inform the policies he promoted, and his leadership style
- As *Tao* radiated from his person as subtle charisma, it would set the tone for the entire society and become the foundation for an ideal social order
- This union of spiritual and political interests as a distinctive feature of the *Tao Te Ching*
- To keep the people free from their desires, the ruler must be aware of his own
- The uncarved block symbolizes the original state of man and represents the ruler. The ruler must keep the people in a state similar to the uncarved block
- The successful ruler governs the state without resorting to action
- The *Tao Te Ching* consists of advice about how to rule
- The *Tao Te Ching* criticizes rulers who exploit society for their own advantage, or who rely on physical violence (war-making and capital punishment) to achieve their ends

Discussion

- The picture painted of life in a state ruled under the principles of non-action is rather bleak: the people are politically passive, and experience a life of intellectual and material poverty
- With the denial of desire as a necessary goal, is the *Tao Te Ching* ignoring human nature?
- To what extent is it viable or desirable for a ruler in a modern society to follow the main advice of living a simple and peaceful way of life, not seeking after power, wealth or fame?
- The comparison with other models of political leadership, e.g. Machiavelli’s prince, or Plato’s philosopher king, or contemporary representative and democratic leadership models
- In which sense should we understand “doing nothing” as a way of ruling society? The text states that in “doing nothing” one can “accomplish everything”. Is this paradox a problem or an advantage?

Plato: *The Republic*, Books IV–IX**7. Evaluate Plato’s claim that a philosopher possesses both intellectual and practical qualities of character.**

This question asks for an evaluation of the relationship between knowledge and practice with respect to Plato’s description of the character of the philosopher in his ideal state.

Key Points

- In relation to the vital quality of knowledge, a philosopher is superior to all others
- A philosopher knows true reality and possesses practical experience to the highest degree
- A philosopher applies knowledge to practice, giving priority to knowledge
- Knowledge can be combined with practical attributes: the Simile of the Ship
- A philosopher loves every branch of learning that reveals eternal reality which s/he loves
- A philosopher hates untruth just as much as s/he loves truth
- A philosopher is interested in pleasures of the mind and not in physical pleasures
- A philosopher is self-controlled and displays no meanness, pettiness or cowardice
- A philosopher has no fear of death as s/he regards life as of no great consequence
- A philosopher is just, courageous and cooperative
- A philosopher learns easily, has good memory and a sense of proportion
- A philosopher is fully educated and mature
- A philosopher distinguishes knowledge from opinion and belief from illusion
- A philosopher appreciates the relationship between theory and practice, knowledge and opinion and never confuses them
- A philosopher has been given the opportunity of getting involved and struggling with those who argue only for the value of practical matters: the Simile of the Cave
- A philosopher understands the place of physical, material and practical matters in relation to knowledge: the Divided Line and the Simile of the Sun; the Captain and the Ship of State; the analogy of the Wild Beast
- A philosopher achieves superiority in intelligence (knowing); a philosopher-ruler achieves the proper balance between intellect and practical application (knowing and ruling)
- A philosopher must have knowledge of the Forms (especially of the Form of the Good)

Discussion

- Why does Plato believe that “knowing that” must be balanced with “knowing how” in the character of the philosopher?
- Why does theory have priority over practice?
- Why can no argument from the level of practice be successful against theory?
- How does Plato’s educational programme instil the intellectual qualities required of a philosopher? Is the argument successful?
- How does Plato’s educational programme provide for opportunities on the level of practice for the engagement of those intellectual qualities? Is the argument successful?
- Is the acquisition of the balance between intelligence and practical application that which distinguishes a philosopher from a philosopher-ruler?
- How does the philosopher’s knowledge of the Forms (especially the Form of the Good) confer knowledge of how to rule in the sensible world?
- Does Plato demonstrate that intelligence must always find practical application in an ideal state?
- Does Plato argue that practical matters are able to focus the mind on intellectual matters?
- How do the various similes help clarify the relationship of intellectual and practical matters? Between theory and practice?

8. Explain and discuss the relation between the Simile of the Cave, Plato's theory of knowledge, and politics.

This question asks for a discussion of the elements of the Simile of the Cave in relation to Plato's theory of knowledge and his political views. The political views might be approached with regard to the ideal state and the character of the philosopher-ruler.

Key Points

- General elements of Plato's theory of knowledge: illusion, belief, knowledge, opinion, mathematical reasoning, philosophical reasoning *etc.*
- Plato's theory of knowledge for the prisoners chained inside the cave: shadows on the cave wall; illusion
- Plato's theory of knowledge for the liberated prisoner inside the cave: shadows produced by light source shining on objects casting shadows; the realm of opinion
- Plato's theory of knowledge for the liberated prisoner outside the cave: shadows cast by real objects, real objects themselves, the sun and sunlight, vision of the Good; knowledge and knowledge of the Form of the Good
- Implications of the Simile of the Cave: the process of liberation and the struggle from the cave as the process of achieving dialectical reasoning and becoming a philosopher, acquiring knowledge and the knowledge of the Form of the Good
- The Simile of the Cave entails political implications and a connection between Plato's theory of knowledge and his political views
- Enlightenment requires returning to the cave to bring others from illusion to knowledge
- Returning to the cave brings derision, insult and danger to the philosopher
- The education/liberation of the philosopher is possible and creates an expert ruler
- The ideal or just state is possible only by expert rule
- The philosopher represented by the liberated and enlightened prisoner is an expert ruler
- Rule by a philosopher is not impossible and s/he will be the means of implementing an ideal, just state
- The just, ideal, perfect state is, therefore, achievable only with great difficulty, a proper education programme and at great risk to the philosopher-ruler
- The ideal state: possibility *vs.* impossibility; probability *vs.* improbability
- Are Plato's views on philosophy and politics hierarchical and undemocratic?

Discussion

- To what extent is the Simile of the Cave an accurate representation of Plato's theory of knowledge?
- Is the main objective of the Simile of the Cave theoretical or practical?
- How well does the Simile of the Cave represent Plato's political views as presented in his definition of the just, ideal, perfect state?
- Does the struggle of the liberated prisoner to leave the darkness of the cave and the difficulty this prisoner experiences to re-enter the cave credibly represent the dangers of political leadership?
- Does the Simile of the Cave have contemporary political relevance? In what ways?
- How important is the relationship between intellectual enlightenment and legitimate political authority and rule?
- Are Plato's ideas more philosophical than political?
- Are Plato's epistemological and political views relevant outside the Western intellectual and political traditions?
- Does Plato neglect the importance of experience in politics?
- What are the precise ways in which the Simile of the Cave, Plato's theory of knowledge and politics are interrelated?

René Descartes: *Meditations*

9. Explain and discuss Descartes’s arguments for the existence of God.

This question invites an explanation and discussion of the material in the *Meditations* which concern arguments for God’s existence. Although these arguments are principally discussed in *Meditation III and V*, responses may also look at the implications for arguments about God’s existence in other parts of the *Meditations*.

Key Points

- Proof of God’s existence through the so-called “trademark” argument; God has placed an innate idea of Himself in us acting as “the mark of the craftsman”
- The causal adequacy principle; God can cause material reality but not the other way round
- The idea of God “eternal, infinite, immutable” *etc.*; the only adequate cause of such ideas must be the source of them, namely God, because such ideas are not found in the material world or in humans
- The idea of God is “clear and distinct”, according to Descartes. Is it?
- The ontological argument for the existence of God in *Meditation V*; Descartes sees no possibility of a gap between the idea of God and the existence of God – to think of God without existence would involve a contradiction
- Descartes’s reason is that existence is a quality of perfection and God is perfect
- The idea of God must entail perfection and thus existence
- Proof of God’s existence through the “ontological” argument

Discussion

- Descartes’s view of substance and his demarcation between the quality of knowledge which pertains to the physical and the mental substances
- What is clearly and distinctly perceived must be true; but what is to count as “clear and distinct”?
- Is the causal adequacy principle persuasive and/or acceptable? Could not a lesser reality cause a greater one?
- Why is the existence of God considered a greater reality than the existence of human beings?
- Descartes’s response to the possibility of the idea of God being an abstraction from human limitations to something greater
- Descartes lists objections to the ontological argument; is perfection a necessary attribute? And, can thought properly entail existence?
- Is existence a predicate? Could there be a concept of God without God existing?

10. Explain and discuss the notion of “clear and distinct” ideas.

This question invites an explanation and discussion of what Descartes has to say about the nature and quality of some knowledge, especially as covered in parts of *Meditation III*. Responses can look at the justification Descartes gives both for what constitutes a “clear and distinct” idea and the conclusions he reaches about such ideas.

Key Points

- “Clear and distinct” ideas are those which are known in a direct way by the knower, not through the medium of sense experience or imagination
- The rationalist tradition. Descartes’s wax example
- “Clear and distinct” ideas are exemplified in the *cogito*
- Judgments about our ideas are more privileged than judgments about our bodies
- “Clear and distinct” ideas are the only certain route to truth
- How do we determine which ideas are “clear and distinct” and which are not? Descartes looks at the way we can know the truths of mathematics and distinguishes between those known directly and those which are not
- “Clear and distinct” ideas and “indefeasibility”
- The role of the will in assenting to such ideas; the irresistibility of believing “clear and distinct” ideas as opposed to externally perceived ideas
- The role of God
- Matter, extension, body and their relation to clear and distinct ideas

Discussion

- The role of the deceiver in generating Descartes’s doubt
- Descartes’s account of imagination; imagination does not come straight from the mind, but involves a bodily element; the negative consequences of imagination on the understanding and the will
- The difference between thinking and remembering
- Thoughts can bear more than just the likeness of the object, *e.g.* emotions, beliefs
- Descartes’s foundationalism and the clarity of mathematics which can account for the basis of true knowledge of the external world
- Does the *cogito* really count as knowledge?
- Possible sources of ideas: innate, adventitious ideas, and ideas created by the thinker
- Should the fact that an idea is “clear and distinct” guarantee its veracity?

John Locke: *Second Treatise on Government***11. Evaluate the claim that a just action might become aggressive.**

This question invites an evaluation of the problem of balancing just action in conflicts with the rights and rules of engagement, so as to prevent abuse.

Key Points

- The nature and purpose of just actions and just conquest; protecting property and life
- Just action can become aggressive when the following limits are broken: namely, unjust seizure of property and infringement of liberties
- The nature of righteous conquest relating to retribution
- If a war was deemed to be just, and the conqueror acted within the rules of engagement, then the conqueror in war acted justly
- The unjust use of force creates a state of war
- The rules and limits of such conflicts include the seizing of property without harm to the wealth of future generations. The conqueror, however, is allowed to seize the life of the aggressor
- Locke's position seems to allow for the seizure of property in a competitive environment, but that just action, which is violent, is a last resort
- The limits of despotic power; this power does not apply to those who are not guilty of aggression
- The resolution and end to despotic power by gaining the approval of the people
- The individual's rights to life, liberty and property needing to be protected even from abuse by the protector
- The role of the social contract in establishing justice

Discussion

- Can just action be clearly distinguished from mere aggression? The issue of defining clearly the driving motive of the action
- Can future generations be beyond the reach of just actions?
- Can non-combatants be beyond the reach of just actions?
- The difficulty in a time of conflict of defining clear lines of ownership of property; Locke's notion of property
- How much is Locke's model reflective of a historical setting when rights were not yet clearly defined?
- How far can Locke's model be applied to our war on terrorism or state terrorism?
- Can the legitimate taking of life be resolved in Locke's schema by being justified for the protection of life, liberty and property?
- Mechanisms that might be used by individuals, the people, to constrain the abuse of power and aggressive action. Does Locke in the end legitimize revolt?
- Parallels between Locke's notion of just actions being non-aggressive with the idea in Islam and other traditions of defensive actions which are pre-emptive

12. Evaluate the claim that governments can be dissolved but civil society cannot.

This question asks for an evaluation of Locke's views on the dissolution of government and civil society.

Key Points

- The role of government to protect life and property
- The nature of legitimate dissent; when the government ceases to fulfil its basic function
- The toleration of the trivial breaking of rules by government
- Dissolution of government can be carried out when it has lost the respect, support and trust of the people
- Dissolution has to be evolutionary; as one government is replaced by another, the rule of law continues. People must come together to form a new government
- A collapse of all government by invasion from a foreign army could lead to a dissolution of civil society; anarchy
- Society can be dissolved when solidity and solidarity of the people has ceased; that is, there is no protection against violence, a state of war comes about
- The usurpation of power by the legislature is prevented because both the executive and the legislature are not empowered to change the rules of government (constitution)
- Changes in legislature by controlled means, elections, are mechanisms that prevent wholesale revolution
- If trust in government is lost there is no obligation for the people to obey laws and therefore the rule of law ends and dissolution is possible
- Governmental collapse is not a necessary condition for civil societal collapse

Discussion

- How can consensus be achieved on when to dissolve a government?
- Does the agreement to dissolve government create conflict which might produce a collapse of civil society?
- Does Locke intend to prevent a popular challenge to government? His system only condones controlled legitimized change, not revolution
- If the people seek dissolution is it not the role of the government to challenge this to prevent a collapse of civil society?
- In industrialized societies, having complex infrastructures, is it feasible to see a dissolution of government without societal collapse?
- How much does Locke's model rely on apathy and disinterest among the population to bring about radical change?
- Is it inevitable, given the inaction of the masses, that dissolution is not truly legitimate because it is brought about by a few who do not represent the mass?
- Does an ever increasingly educated body politic understand the difficulties of everyday government and tolerate bad government to preserve peace and harmony?
- Do the educated mass of people appreciate that their condition might be beyond the control of government and therefore that government is not to blame?
- Does Locke's idea of balances of power within government maintain civil society at the expense of effective governmental change?

John Stuart Mill: *On Liberty***13. Evaluate the claim that for Mill the liberty of action (the greatest possible expression of individuality) is practically the same as the liberty of speech.**

This question asks for an evaluation of the parallel between two key issues. In examining this parallel answers should discuss Mill's account of liberty.

Key Points

- In both cases liberty is the final principle, the test and judge of individual and social behaviour
- As truth would emerge from liberty, the fullest development of the individual, virtue, even genius, would emerge from the cultivation of individuality
- Both might be based on utility in the largest sense, grounded on the permanent interests of man as a progressive being. The higher human nature, capable of development by self-culture
- Self-culture opens access to higher forms of human happiness, but it has to be self-culture
- Three basic notions of liberty: liberty of thought; liberty of taste/opinion; liberty to join with others of common opinion
- Liberty of thought, freedom of speech and liberty of the individual as instruments by which Mill hoped to guide towards good forms of democracy
- Mill's advice for preventing the threat of conformity and mediocrity which surges in democracy: not less democracy but more liberty
- Freedom of speech and liberty of the individual play an important role for the emancipation and education of the society as a whole

Discussion

- Liberty is vital to ensure progress in society
- Is the view that the fundamental value is individuality a sound one?
- Would an emphasis on individuality guarantee progress and protection from repression and conformity?
- Modern examples of communities which sacrifice individuality for the greater good – see cult communities; types of corporations; communist dictatorships *etc.* Must all communities end up sacrificing individual members to the greater good?
- Do not human beings, in theory and in practice, desire things other than happiness?
- Individual liberty must be a politically fundamental right; for self-development is one of the essentials of human well-being
- What legitimate restrictions does Mill place on liberty of action and discussion? Are these restrictions reasonable?
- Dangers for other individuals through the misuse of the freedom of speech (*e.g.* hate crimes)

14. Evaluate Mill’s proposition that for actions that are prejudicial to the interests of others, “the individual is accountable and may be subjected either to social or to legal punishment if society is of the opinion that the one or the other is requisite for its protection”.

This question asks for an evaluation of the second maxim of the two which “together form the entire doctrine of this essay”, according to Mill’s formulation in his final chapter. Answers might refer to the issue as it is discussed in the previous chapters and to the other, first, complementary maxim.

Key Points

- The first maxim states that the individual is not accountable to society for his actions insofar as these concern the interests of no person other than himself
- The primary moral focus of the individual is concern for his or her own well-being, and the welfare of others is a distant second. It is through education that selfish attitudes can be changed, not by any other means
- Every individual that receives protection from society does owe something for this benefit, namely, not to injure or harm the interests of others, and to bear a share of the labour and sacrifice to afford the protection and benefits, and society has every right to enforce these
- Damage, or probability of damage, to the interests of others can alone, and always does, justify the interference of society

Discussion

- Is the model of an autonomous, rational person with inherent rights, liberties, and responsibilities an idealized one? Do people ever need protection from themselves?
- Is it possible to draw such a clear line between what is the concern only of the individual and what concerns society? The argument that self-harm is not limited to one person because it can affect the family, friends and community
- The overriding principle in assessing the value of autonomy remains the principle of utility
- In the current international political context (*e.g.* war on terror, wikileaks), are Mill’s arguments for free expression and thought counterproductive for the security of the State?
- Mill’s views on the role and nature of government have become basic tenets for the nature and scope of individual liberty in liberal democracies

Friedrich Nietzsche: *The Genealogy of Morals*

15. Explain and discuss the account of the development and origin of the master–slave moral codes.

This question invites an explanation and discussion of the material in the first essay (in *Genealogy*) which describes the historical evolution of different codes of morality. Responses might deal specifically with what Nietzsche says about the different codes and might also look at Nietzsche’s account of, and its assumptions about, the way morality developed.

Key Points

- Two kinds of morality evolve with different genealogies
- Genealogical explanations differ from historical ones in that there is no fixed origin of a genealogical development, which arises from a complex of factors
- Nietzsche’s account offers an explanation of morality from “pre-moral” states allowing the possibility of a new understanding in the contemporary situation
- “Master” morality emerges from the dominant aristocratic class and the term “good” is self-referential denoting the class’s own success, in particular, material success and wealth
- In turn the “masters” describe as “bad” the “slave” morality, which refers to the powerlessness and basic poverty of the herd who are ruled over by the “masters”
- “Slave” or “herd” morality has its origin in the leadership of ascetic priests who consider the experience of suffering and passivity to be “good”; following this leadership enables a majority to see weakness as being noble and of benefit for the pursuit of heaven
- “Slave” morality is driven by a feeling of *ressentiment* towards the relatively few masters and, despite Nietzsche’s criticisms, it is more profound than the material “master” morality and leads to the Christian morality of the modern age, which originates from a rejection of the morality of the rulers
- Thus morality has a pre-moral origin and is used as an explanation for those who seek to maintain the *status quo* or to conform or to postpone hope to the future

Discussion

- Language as developed by the “masters”
- The class system as generating human experience and understanding
- Nietzsche’s historical method; is it satisfactory or convincing?
- Is the delineation between a “pre-moral” and a moral concept convincing?
- The analogy of the lambs and the birds of prey
- What are the positive and negative results of the slave revolt in morality?

16. Explain and discuss the relationship of the ascetic ideal to truth.

This question invites an explanation and discussion of the account Nietzsche gives in the third essay (of *Genealogy*) of the ascetic ideal which emerges from his reflection on the development of culture. In the most central passage (Section 24) the issue of truth and denial becomes a central concern.

Key Points

- The self-denying nature of the ascetic ideal; the restraint of human urges like sensuality
- Nietzsche selects groups for his discussion of the meaning of the ascetic ideal, some of which relate more closely to the truth than others
- The artist and the ascetic ideal; the need to separate an artist from his or her work; Nietzsche's treatment of the artist (influenced by his real life dealings with Wagner); art is a deception, the most serious lie which becomes glorified by the artist in a way deception in other activities is not
- The philosopher and the ascetic ideal; the role of metaphysics and the relation of science to philosophy (a parasitic one)
- Science and philosophy and the will to truth; the ascetic ideal and the will to truth
- The ascetic ideal as a release from torture; as a bridge to independence for the philosopher
- The issue of the seeking of truth and the role of faith
- Science as only giving a certain perspective of truth
- The priest and the ascetic ideal; the priest must be sick and also have the will to power; priests channel *ressentiment* to the self but only treat symptoms and not the cause of the human disease
- Guilt and the ascetic ideal; man invents meaning for suffering by understanding all suffering through guilt
- Knowledge only arises within a perspective mitigating against the discovery of truth
- The importance of interpretation in the will to truth

Discussion

- Nietzsche's pessimism that there is a certain objective truth to be discovered
- Nietzsche is grappling with the conclusion that humans will prefer to will nothingness than not will at all
- The ascetic priest and "overcoming"; is this a deception?
- Does man seek suffering and does this give rise to the ascetic ideal?
- Is the sensual deprivation characterized by philosophical activity truth denying?
- Is Nietzsche right that science denies the possibility of absolute truth existing?
- Are the metaphysical assumptions of science not justifiable?
- Is there a distinction, as Nietzsche maintains, between knowledge and truth?
- What value does the genealogical method have?

Bertrand Russell: *The Problems of Philosophy*

17. Explain and discuss the nature of an object, for example, a table, which is considered to exist independently of my perception of it.

This question asks for an explanation and discussion of the epistemological and ontological status of objects which are considered to exist independently of a person's perception of that object. It invites a discussion of whether, over and above the sense impressions we have which make up the appearance of objects, there is something else of which these things are appearances.

Key Points

- It is rational to believe that sense-data are signs of the existence of things independent of our sense perceptions
- The relationship of mind to idea to sense impression to material object
- When sense-data cease we do not believe that the source of the sense-data ceases to exist
- The reappearance of sense-data in perception shows that objects exist continuously in time
- Physical sciences assign position in space and motion to objects independent of perception
- Physical objects are in the space of science or physical space
- What we know by our senses is much more than what the sciences provide as information
- People see the same object in different shapes; the real shape is not the apparent shape
- Real shape/space is public; apparent shape/space is private
- There is also public time and private time
- Physical objects cannot completely resemble our sense-data but may be regarded as causing sensations
- Our sense-data are situated in our private spaces, *e.g.* space of sight and touch
- There is one public physical space dealt with by geometry and physics in which all physical objects exist
- The relative positions of physical objects in physical space correspond to the relative positions of sense-data in our private spaces
- We can know the arrangement of physical objects that results from spatial relations
- Physical objects themselves remain unknown in their intrinsic nature insofar as they are known by the senses
- Objects themselves are not exactly like sense-data; they are more or less like sense-data

Discussion

- How do conditions of sense perception interfere with the ideas formed on the basis of sense-data?
- Can the gap between an idea and the physical object of which we have the idea ever be crossed in a convincing manner?
- Are there any convincing philosophical arguments which will allow us to claim that we know the nature of physical matter?
- Is Russell's position just another example of philosophical idealism? Of representational or inferential realism?
- Is Russell's position refuted by naïve realism?
- Does Russell separate the findings and achievements of the sciences from the findings and achievements of philosophy in a way that prevents co-operation between the two disciplines?
- Must physical objects remain unknown in their intrinsic nature?
- Does Russell's position threaten us with solipsism?
- Are the problems Russell suggests simply methodological problems generated by the perspective he is putting forth?

18. **“Philosophy is to be studied, not for the sake of any definite answers to its questions ... but rather for the sake of the questions themselves.” Discuss and evaluate Russell’s claim.**

This question asks for a discussion and evaluation of Russell’s claims about the value of philosophy and his answers to the question of why philosophy should be studied. It allows for a consideration of the positive achievements and contributions of philosophy as well as of the weaknesses or shortcomings of the discipline.

Key Points

- Some view philosophy as innocent, useless attention to matters of which knowledge is impossible
- This error misunderstands the objectives philosophy tries to achieve
- Philosophy affects others through the effects it has on those who study philosophy
- Philosophy’s value lies in the goods of the mind and attracts those who appreciate them
- Philosophy aims at knowledge, gives unity to the sciences and results from the critical examination of beliefs and convictions
- The achievements of philosophy are modest in comparison with those of the sciences
- Science is built on the foundations of philosophy’s method of asking questions
- Philosophy deals with matters of profound significance and focuses on significant questions but does not pretend to achieve definitive answers
- Philosophy does not begin with any set of beliefs already believed to be true
- Philosophy’s value is to be sought in its uncertainty; it suggests possibilities to enlarge our thought
- The greatness of the objects of contemplation highlight the value of philosophy
- The value of philosophy is its intention to transcend self-interest
- Philosophy affirms the value of the non-self and breaks barriers between object and subject
- Philosophy makes us citizens of the universe moved by the pursuit of truth

Discussion

- How realistic and practical is Russell’s view of the value of philosophy?
- What good are questions without answers?
- How does philosophy enrich and enlarge human thought and knowledge?
- How can philosophy survive alongside the practical, concrete achievements of the sciences?
- Is Russell’s appreciation of the value of philosophy somewhat elitist?
- What are the significant concerns constitutive of philosophical questioning that make philosophy so special in Russell’s opinion?
- Is philosophy more an activity than a body of knowledge for Russell?
- In non-Western cultures how relevant is Russell’s view of philosophical activity?
- Does philosophy continue to be the foundation upon which the sciences rest?

Hannah Arendt: *The Human Condition*

19. Evaluate Arendt’s statement that “Human plurality, the basic condition of both action and speech, has the two-fold character of equality and distinction”.

This question asks for an evaluation of the disclosure of the agent in speech and action.

Key Points

- If humans were not equal, they could not understand each other. If humans were not distinct, they would need neither speech nor action to make themselves understood; signs and sounds to communicate immediate, identical needs and wants would be enough
- Human distinctness is not the same as otherness. Otherness is more abstract and is found in the sheer multiplicity of inorganic objects, whereas organic life already shows variations and distinctions. But only humans can express their distinctiveness and distinguish themselves. In humans otherness and distinctness become uniqueness
- Human plurality is the paradoxical plurality of unique beings
- Speech and action reveal the unique human distinctiveness
- With word and deed we insert ourselves into the human world
- To act, in its more general sense, means to take an initiative; it means to begin to set something into motion
- Action: unique expression of the human capacities for freedom and transcendence, a distinctively human achievement; it includes such things as speaking, arguing, persuading, taking initiatives, standing up for a cause and protesting against evil
- Action and speech are so closely related because the primordial and specifically human act must at the same time contain the answer to the question asked of every newcomer: who are you?
- Being human means being an agent, a doer, and this is only possible by means of speech. No other human performance requires speech to the same extent as action
- Without the disclosure of the agent by speech in the act, action loses its specific character and becomes a form of achievement among others

Discussion

- Is it necessary to identify action with speech to be able to sustain the distinctiveness of human action?
- Action, speech and the political life; politics as the highest human activity, because it enables citizens to reflect on their collective life, to give meaning to their personal lives and to develop a creative and cohesive community
- The relation between the spheres of the public, the private, and the social
- Is silent action less human? Religious and moral experiences seem to have dimensions which are beyond speech
- How does Arendt argue for authentic individuality in contexts of plurality of action? Are her arguments successful?

20. Explain and discuss what Arendt identifies as “the victory of the *animal laborans*”.

This question asks for an explanation and discussion of Arendt’s central concern to show what it means to be human through understanding human activity from the perspective of its failure, because of the victory of the *animal laborans*.

Key Points

- The victory of the *animal laborans* shapes the last stage of the modern age: the labouring society, the society of jobholders. This kind of society demands of its members a sheer automatic functioning
- Individual life has been submerged in the overall life process of the species
- The only active decision still required of the individual is to abandon his or her individuality
- The trouble with modern theories of behaviourism is not that they are wrong but that they could become true
- If we compare the modern world with that of the past, the loss of human experience involved in this development is extraordinarily striking
- The victory of the *animal laborans* is characterized by the most sterile passivity history has ever known
- The victory of the *animal laborans* would never have been complete had not the process of secularization, the modern loss of faith inevitably arising from Cartesian doubt, deprived individual life of immortality, or at least of the certainty of immortality

Discussion

- Is political freedom still possible?
- Different relations between labour and action and between work and action
- The role of the Greek *polis* in contrast to the modern world
- Does Arendt’s view express a “romantic” or “conservative” position which denies the modern world?
- Is *vita activa* always open as a possibility to human beings? Would it imply that it is a sort of natural characteristic of the human condition?
- Is conformity of opinions and interests the main or only collective reaction in contemporary societies?
- How might it be possible to recover authenticity in contemporary societies?
- Is Arendt’s view a strictly Western perspective? What relevance might it have to non-Western societies?

Simone de Beauvoir: *The Ethics of Ambiguity*

21. Explain and discuss the relationship between freedom and reciprocity.

This question asks for an explanation and discussion of two central elements of de Beauvoir's ethical perspective. It might include an exploration of the establishment of interpersonal relationships in the context of maintaining personal independence and integrity. It allows for a consideration of how freedom and reciprocity are lived out in the ambiguity of the human condition.

Key Points

- The moral agent is connected, not independent
- Notions of freedom, reciprocity and ambiguity coalesce in action
- To be free is to recognize that one is free and that others are free as well
- Freedom comes about by transcending immanence and facticity
- Freedom is always relational and reciprocal
- Ambiguity: one is strong enough to dominate others and weak enough to give in to the whims of others
- To be free and human is to try to be sovereign and to fail
- To be free is to be a master and slave, unique and insignificant, masterful and powerless, to be in relation with others in practical action
- We are free but always acted upon by outside influences
- Authentic freedom is choosing and acting towards some end and is defined through choice and action
- Human action engages each person with every other in creating meaning and value
- Individual freedom recognizes the meaning created by others in collective action
- Political freedom is the practical means to ontological freedom
- The desire for freedom in collective action is the basis for ethical values

Discussion

- Is it possible to recognize independence and connectedness?
- To what extent is de Beauvoir influenced by Sartre on the notions of freedom and reciprocity?
- How does the existence of others as free agents define my own situation and become the condition of my own freedom?
- Why is an individual dependent on recognition by the other and how does this establish relations of reciprocity?
- Does de Beauvoir successfully distinguish between metaphysical, practical and political freedom?
- Is the individual ultimately defined and limited by the collectivity on which s/he depends?
- What is an authentically free, reciprocal relationship?
- Are de Beauvoir's perspectives relevant to contemporary society? To non-Western societies?

22. To what extent does de Beauvoir’s ethical system provide a response to the objection that existentialism encloses the individual in an empty subjectivism, making him or her incapable of following any principles for making choices?

This question asks for an assessment of whether de Beauvoir’s existentialist ethics provides a perspective for the individual freely to engage in principled action in relation to others. It also allows for an exploration of the extent to which de Beauvoir develops a system in which the dynamics of intersubjectivity do, in fact, provide general principles for making choices.

Key Points

- De Beauvoir’s ethics rest on notions of ambiguity, disclosure, natural and ethical freedom
- The individual is a subject and a masterful, sovereign being
- The individual is also an object – a material, vulnerable being bound to the world
- As a subject, the individual can transcend the circumstances of isolated subjectivity
- As an object, the individual can never break free from the circumstances of objectivity
- Philosophy has attempted to avoid this tension either by reducing the individual to matter (materialists), to mind (idealists), or by adopting both options (dualists)
- Ethics which provide an authentic account of freedom and action must acknowledge this ambiguity
- Ethics must be based on an ontology of the human condition which affirms interdependence and the assumption that persons want to justify their existence to themselves and to others
- Because our existence is groundless, interdependence leads persons to disclose being through the creation of meaning and value
- Disclosure wills the existence of others by and through whom the world is given meaning
- This disclosure entails the natural, ontological freedom of each individual
- Natural or ontological freedom finds practical expression in ethical freedom
- Ethical freedom issues in action in social, economic and political liberation open to a future
- Human existence makes values spring up in the world; free choices are the source from which these values emerge
- This project is carried out in the community in which we will the concrete freedom of others

Discussion

- Does de Beauvoir’s ethical system remain subjectivist with natural and ethical freedom thrown in for good measure?
- Does de Beauvoir’s notion of freedom lack concrete, practical content?
- Does it follow that in order to promote our own freedom we are obliged to promote the freedom of others?
- Can any existentialist ethics provide a relevant view of the human condition if it claims the absence of any objective moral order? Is a convincing existentialist ethics possible at all?
- How successful is de Beauvoir’s ethical system in helping an individual avoid an empty subjectivism?
- How relevant is de Beauvoir’s system to our daily ethical concerns?
- If ambiguity and tension are characteristics of the human condition, can any ethical system avoid collapsing into empty subjectivism?
- Does de Beauvoir’s ethical system have any relevance to non-Western cultures? If so, how?
- In developing her ethical system from the ontology of the human condition does de Beauvoir commit the error of deriving “ought” from “is”?
- Is de Beauvoir’s analysis of idealism, materialism and dualism convincing?
- Does de Beauvoir provide a credible view of just how we create values and give meaning to the world?

Charles Taylor: *The Ethics of Authenticity*

23. Evaluate the claim that dialogue is essential if we want to give meaning to our lives.

This question asks for an evaluation of Taylor’s claim that it is interactions with others that give meaning to and understanding of ourselves.

Key Points

- The loss of meaning brought about the disappearance of moral horizons that can be rediscovered through dialogue
- Our loss of purpose is a result of seeing others as means to an end not ends in themselves
- The loss of freedom is caused by the atomization of the individual who has become isolated from others
- The importance of interacting with others, through dialogue so as to rediscover these possibilities
- The need in our modern societies to create opportunities to “talk” with each other and see ourselves through the other
- The effect of isolationism is an increasingly relativistic view of moral values
- The establishment of authenticity through horizons of significance, which involves respect and care for others and the natural world
- Individualism should not be an end in itself, there is a need to see our role in a large community
- The effect of technology produces individualized superficial lives focused on private, not public, pursuits
- The need to re-establish the natural dialogic nature of humans so that our choices and actions help form our personality and social identity within a wider community

Discussion

- Is the person as part of community central for a good life of harmony and psychological happiness?
- What is the extent to which Taylor’s own background influences his apparent belief in collectivism? Catholic traditions vs. protestant individualism
- Does technology really encourage isolationism or might it produce a different sort of community of individuals?
- Is relativism driven by individual choices morally better than absolute societal moral codes and practices?
- Does self-absorption produce loss of meaning in our lives?
- Does a lack of self-knowledge lead to a lack of dialogue or does a lack of dialogue lead to a lack of self-knowledge?
- Has passion gone from our everyday lives because of the loss of meaning and purpose in our actions?
- Reason and rational discourse do make a difference

24. Explain and discuss the role of reason within the activity of an “examined life”.

This question invites an explanation and discussion of the role of instrumental reason in the process of self-examination and the discovery of the need to relate to others. It might also involve a discussion of different understandings of “reason”.

Key Points

- The nature of instrumental reason as one of the tools to find one’s true self
- The positive and negative qualities of instrumental reason as with other tools of experience and subjectivism
- Reason can help balance the pressures toward relativism and produce a more balanced way of life that is more sincere
- When rationally examining our life we discover the positive aspects of modernity as well as the negatives. The need to get the right interaction between the power of individual action and creativeness with its self-destructive and demeaning qualities
- Reason is one of the roots that appreciates the horizons of significance and establishes authenticity in one’s life
- Reason can refine self-consciousness but there is also need for interaction with others
- Reason also keeps one’s life in balance with the expectations of reality and public aspirations and values. Without reason the person becomes completely self-absorbed

Discussion

- How far has Taylor rescued reason from being one of the claimed causes for the decline of Western civilization?
 - Is it essential for reason to be used in conjunction with other tools so as to examine one’s life in the “right” way?
 - Is there a need for an individual to become more self-conscious? Can an individual be a happy and a productive member of society without engaging in this activity?
 - Will rational examination of one’s self preclude the need for others? Are humans naturally collective, or, when not, are they “lesser” humans?
 - Does self-examination lead to a greater understanding of the other and one’s role with the other?
 - What constitutes an authentic use of reason?
 - Can reason help refine self-consciousness?
-