

MARKSCHEME

MAY 2005

PHILOSOPHY

Higher Level and Standard Level

Paper 1

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SECTION A

Core Theme: What is a ‘human’ being?

1. (a) **What philosophical issues are being suggested by the picture?** [3 marks]

Some of the following ideas might be identified:

- That the mind is isolated from the real world, it could be seen that the individual actually encourages this.
- That the person is imprisoned by their own thoughts
- The Mind-Body problem
- The issue and nature of consciousness

- (b) **With reference at least *two* conceptions of mind, compare differing views of the nature of the mind.** [12 marks]

Views that could be included (it is not necessarily expected for candidates to name them as actual theories):

- Dualism
- Identity theory of the mind
- Behaviourist view
- Ryle and the mind as merely a ghost
- Functionalist ideas
- Theories of consciousness
- Other conceptions of mind based on religion, psychology and common sense

- (c) **“A mind that could know the object-world without any error would know nothing at all” (Alain in *The Gods*, EA Chartier). Discuss.** [15 marks]

- The issue of perception and interpretation
- The issue of experience
- The types of knowing and the nature of ‘weak’ knowing and maybe a mention of inductive reasoning
- The physiological process and interpretation process
- The error factor being an element of creativity
- The error factor being drug induced either deliberately or naturally
- The implication in the question about the limit of knowing in an absolute sense
- Discussion of Russell’s concepts of belief
- Discussion of Plato’s Theory of Forms
- A challenge to the assertion whether the mind knows anything and hence the mechanical nature of knowing if that were the case

2. (a) **What philosophical problem or idea about the human condition does this picture present?** [3 marks]

Some of the following points could be seen in the picture:

- The innate aggression in humans perhaps declaring that a human is basically an animal
- The ‘wardom’ of Hobbes when self interest is left to rule unchecked
- The overcrowded and inhuman conditions of industrial and/or urban life
- The use of torture as a means to an end practiced by some groups. Candidates might make reference to recent atrocities e.g. The Holocaust.
- Some candidates may know it is an attack by a gang, therefore pick up on the job/gang mentality of some modern societies. They might make mention of *Clockwork Orange*.
- There might be an insight into class division/exploitation in that only two men have ties and these seem to dominate.

- (b) **Explain a view of human nature that supports the idea that you have identified and then present a contrasting view of human nature.** [12 marks]

Views that could be included (it is not necessarily expected for candidates to name them as actual theories):

- Hobbes’ idea that man is inherently selfish and egotistical could be contrasted with Rousseau’s view that man is inherently good.
- A Marxist view could be put forward in that the industrial environment has caused the views in the picture and this could be resolved by the march to a new society.
- A Christian/religious view could be put forward that upholds the Fall of Man.
- Freud’s views might be put forward in that this is the animal man out of control. It could be that the candidate has seen the picture as an internal struggle.
- Nietzsche’s view could be expounded with the idea of the ‘noble’ taking charge and exercising ‘The Will’ unchecked.

- (c) **To what extent are the constraints imposed by society a reaction to human nature?** [15 marks]

- The notion of why a contract may develop to protect man from his fellow human or their self
- The idea that laws are necessary in the best interests of the majority
- Whether this is an evolutionary process in that social values are declining and therefore the state needs to step in
- Who should decide and enact the constraints?
- The inner struggle with the self, self-interest and greed, therefore creating the need for self-control
- The changing nature of society in recent years in that self-preservation may now cause the individual to take the law into their own hands
- The issue of too much individual freedom contrasted with too much interference by the state
- The idea that the constraints may have nothing to do with the nature of man and could be a result of an individual or group exercising too much power
- An anarchist’s position could be mentioned in that government/state need not exist and then the inherently ‘good man’ would prosper.

SECTION B

Optional Theme 1: Political Philosophy

3. Can a pre-emptive war against another state ever be just? Discuss.

The purpose of this question is to allow candidates to critically discuss just war theories and the justification of a pre-emptive strike in particular. The question also calls for a discussion on such issues as sovereignty, power and limitations that a political leader or a state should perhaps have.

Key points

- ‘Pre-emptive war’ can be defined for example as ‘a war aimed to prevent suspected enemy attack’; some ideas of just war theories.
- *Jus ad bellum* (Just War): the cause is just, the war is a last resort and it is fought by a legitimate authority, it is likely to succeed and does more good than harm.
- Clausewitz and Bismarck: war is the continuation of politics by other means.

Discussion

- Pacifism and the moral justification for the use of violence
- Evaluation of aspects of just war theories: the problems of finding good reasons for going to war, e.g. predicting if the war does more good than harm; discussion on under which conditions the leader exceeds the limits of his/her power and under which conditions does a pre-emptive strike constitute a crime against humanity.
- The role of international organisations such as the United Nations to maintain collective security, and legitimization of a war against an aggressor, pre-emptive strikes by individual states.
- There is no reason why pre-emptive war could not be just if it meets the demands of *jus ad bellum*.

4. “The idea of human rights is nonsense. It is talk without meaning.” Critically evaluate this statement.

The purpose of this question is to allow candidates to critically explore and discuss the idea and justification of human rights, and explore what consequences the idea of rights has to individuals and societies.

Key points

- The idea of rights in general and human rights in particular; ideas and theories about what makes propositions meaningful
- The quotation, a modified version of what Bentham said, claims that human rights are not an object of reality; consequently to talk about human rights does not signify anything.
- Views of human rights: attempts to justify human rights, for example Locke’s natural rights theory, Mill’s utilitarian perspective or Gewirth’s Kantian perspective

Discussion

- Discussion on the nature of human rights; possibility of justifying the existence of human rights, rights as cultural products or innate to the human condition
- Discussion could also be partially based on moral, cultural and social consequences that result from agreeing or disagreeing with the quote.
- There are many examples one can use to illustrate the discussion, for example the UN Declaration of Human Rights (1948), or the denial of human rights in totalitarian states and during war as in the genocides of Cambodia, Rwanda and ex-Yugoslavia.
- The difference between civil and human rights

Optional Theme 2: Knowledge

5. **“The truth of my concepts depends entirely on their relationship with my other concepts.” Assess and evaluate this claim.**

This question invites candidates to discuss the relational (coherence) and other theories of truth, and also a further question as to the nature of truth, and whether it is relative, or even redundant.

Key points

- Coherence and truth: a statement, p , is true if it coheres with other statements, q , r , s , ..., false if it does not. Interpretations of coherence vary from ‘consistent with’ to ‘entailed’, or ‘is entailed by’.
- Correspondence theory of truth: a statement, p , is true if, and only if, it corresponds with some fact; pragmatic theory of truth: a proposition, p , is true relative to its usefulness, or ‘cash value’.
- Redundancy theory of truth: the predicate ‘is true’, only exists as an expression. What is said could be said without it.
- Theories of truth also entail theories of meaning and reference. I know what something means because I can refer to it. But does that gesture alone guarantee the truth of my reference?

Discussion

- In a coherence test for truth (or relationship model), must there be at least one proposition whose truth value is obtained independently from the others? Is the coherence theory confusing a criterion for truth with the content of truth?
- In what way do my concepts cohere with one another? Does this suggest that all concepts are ultimately derivatives of others? and how do they connect with the external world?
- Is the coherence theory just another form of relativism, as there can be many different and mutually incompatible systems of belief, which may all be internally consistent and self-supporting?
- Is the problem with all theories of truth, language? Our language permits other logically consistent and viable explanations and interpretations, and therefore the question of truth is unimportant.

6. “The problem with science is that it claims to know when all it can do is explain.” Assess and evaluate this claim.

The claim in this question is that science is an explanatory tool and is not knowledge. The candidate could engage with either the difference between the knowledge of science and ‘real’ knowledge, the functional nature of scientific explanations, or the relative quality of knowledge and truth apparent in scientific explanations.

Key points

- Knowledge and science: the claim for knowledge is from empiricism, its reliance on the senses and experience; science, with its methods of verification, repeatability, or falsifiability, are also regarded as justifications for knowing, as is the pragmatic value of scientific laws, theories and explanations.
- The scientific framework of induction and causality, and Hume’s problem of induction, with its consequence of skepticism.
- Explanations in science: as descriptors and predictors of natural phenomena; as statements that are subsumed within a law of nature; as elements that build our world picture (*Weltanschauung*)
- Epistemic relativism: science as one discourse amongst others and a re-evaluation of the authority and influence of science

Discussion

- How can it be argued that science is just another discourse when its explanations are demonstrable, verifiable, and they have a powerful predictive ability?
- Is an explanation a pre-requisite for any claim of knowledge, and the more general the explanation the better? (Platonic concept of knowledge as understanding *nous*)
- Is a scientific explanation merely a redescription of already established facts?
- If an explanation is not a sufficient or necessary condition for knowledge, then what is?

Optional Theme 3: Philosophy of Culture

7. **“True culture is perishing in overproduction of goods and products, in the madness of quantity.” Do you agree with this view of culture? Explain.**

The purpose of this question is to allow candidates to critically explore and discuss the idea of culture and the impact of mass production on culture. The question asks if quality and quantity are mutually exclusive in the field of culture, it aims to result in a critical discussion.

Key points

- The quotation seems to use the term ‘culture’ in a specific sense such as ‘high culture’ rather than in a general sense.
- Culture as ‘shared beliefs, attitudes, practices and behaviour of a particular group’
- The quotation seems to contain an idea that in the field of culture quantity is destroying quality, cultural mass-production, as in the media or entertainment industry, is destroying the ‘true’ culture.

Discussion

- Criticism of the idea that great quantity leads to devaluation of quality in the field of culture. Why should uniqueness of a cultural product increase its value?
- Elitist bias: ‘low culture’ with its mass-production is qualitatively worse than ‘high culture’
- The (mis)understanding of the nature of culture, how could a culture ever perish if defined as ‘shared beliefs, attitudes, practices and behaviour of a particular group’ unless there is a society in which individuals are disconnected, but even in that case ‘disconnectedness’ could be defined as a characteristic feature of that culture.

8. **“It is impossible to truly understand culture, either your own or others, because to have culture means to have a set of assumptions about the world of which we are unaware.” Critically discuss this statement.**

The purpose of this question is to allow candidates to critically explore and discuss ideas of how cultures are understood and ideas of objectivity and bias in the understanding of cultures.

Key points

- ‘Culture’ can be defined as ‘shared beliefs, attitudes, practices and behaviour of a particular group’.
- The idea that cultures might be incomparable (incommensurable) *i.e.* if one is conditioned in a particular way it might be impossible to truly understand another culture.
- The contradiction between seemingly knowing and being unaware
- What are the constituents of understanding cultures?

Discussion

- Humans have abilities such as reason that enables them, to an extent, to question their own cultural assumptions and practices.
- Creation of new cultures, sub-cultures and practices and values, seem to indicate that cultural conditioning is not perfect.
- The assumption that ‘true understanding’ requires an ‘outside look’ or a neutral point of view can be challenged. It may be argued that objectivity or neutrality is impossible to achieve.
- Understanding your own culture can be enhanced ‘from inside’ for example through a hermeneutic and dialectical process. Understanding of another culture can be enhanced through a dialogue.
- The quotation suggests the following ideas: having culture means that you have been conditioned and cultural understanding requires an ‘outside look’ *i.e.* that you are able to look at and judge your own culture from an unconditioned perspective.

Optional Theme 4: World Philosophies

9. **Many religions claim that what is divine is the ‘most’ real. To what extent could this claim be argued from the point of view of at least one of the following: Hinduism, Buddhism or Islam?**

The key concepts for discussion are divinity and reality, and how the two terms are synonymous, in their own particular way, in the three philosophies. There is an expectation that candidates will develop an argument and not merely describe the views of the world philosophies.

Key points

- In Buddhism, divinity is found by attaining *nirvana*. Reality begins and ends in the enlightenment regarding the truth of existence (*nirvana*); you must follow the Eight-Fold Noble Path: right view, thought, speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and concentration; by attaining *anatman* (acceptance of reality without delusion) we escape *samsara* (tied to wheel of life by desire).
- In Hinduism, reality offers illusory appearances and the Brahman is the one who sees through this veil of ignorance, and sees ‘the real’. God(s) do exist, and have different personifications such as: feudal lord, stage actor, builder, exemplar, lover, as man or animal, as woman.
- In Islam, divinity is Allah, and only Allah is God, and He created the world. God is causal, omnipotent, without limitations, knowing and able, unified, and exists. Divinity is one of God’s characteristics. Humans are privileged because they can unite with God, but only after death. Sufism, Whirling Dervishes and mysticism.
- The common characteristics that rejection of everyday life and an ascetic regime are the paths to moral and spiritual awakening or salvation (monks, Brahmin, and the *ārif*)

Discussion

- The metaphysical assumptions and implications that human existence is an illusion for Hindus or a delusion for Buddhists
- Is morality necessarily tied to the injunctions or actions of God(s), or the pronouncements of monks, guru’s and Imams?
- Why must suffering be based in desire? In Islam, suffering is also a punishment, rather than just a lack of something.
- Does resignation in the face of suffering, or to the mercy of God leave Buddhism, Hinduism or Islam open to a charge of political indifference?

10. **One common concept of the self has, as an essential element, the freedom of the individual. To what extent could the autonomy of the self as a fundamental ethical value be supported by the views of at least one of the following: Buddhism, Islam or Hinduism?**

In this question, a discussion on the concept of self is expected, the central issues being the moral and practical freedoms of the individual, and the sources and justifications for this authority over the individual. Free will and determinism is also a likely theme for discussion.

Key points

- The Buddhist concept of autonomy of self is based on the claim that the self of self-consciousness is to be overcome, as this state is one where the 'I' experiences desire. The self is a delusion. When the delusion is overcome, (*anatman*) then real freedom is possible. This is possible through the Eight-Fold Noble Path.
- Islam dictates that we are God's possessions and creations because we have a soul, and God judges us on all our actions. The sources of moral authority are the *Quran*, *Hadith*, and *Shari'ah Law*.
- In Hinduism, understanding *dharma* (right practice, or duty) is the key to developing the best *karma* (actions, dispositions to act); these are the determinants of the individual's freedom. When the *atman* (spiritual self) sees through the illusion, then right action is possible.
- Free will and determinism, the role of fate and the wheel of life, reincarnation, *karma*, God's design and omnipotence are some terms and topics that are central to the debate.

Discussion

- Under what conditions, if any, are acts like abortion, euthanasia, and suicide permitted in Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam? What rights do homosexuals, single mothers, and other social, ethnic, and religious minorities have in these philosophies?
- Though I can change myself, is it my responsibility to change others? How does lack of a rational self lead to a moral understanding of the external world?
- A comparison between the concepts of *atman/anatman* in Hinduism and Buddhism, and their consequence for a moral self
- Have the philosophies answered the question of free will and determinism *i.e.* have they conceived of both concepts in a way that makes the question irrelevant, or have they avoided the issue?

Optional Theme 5: Nature, Work and Technology

11. Could I be happy in a life free of work? Discuss.

This question invites candidates to discuss the ways that work can enrich or define our lives, and also the ways it can become a burden, or demean individuals.

Key points

- Happiness in work can arise from economic rewards (material freedom), social interaction and cooperation (unions, voluntary work), caring for families, happiness as a consequence of some fulfillment in some general terms.
- Marxist view: economic entrapment and necessity make work in a capitalist system alienating *e.g.* workers are not in control of the means of production, or demands placed on the individual compromise other relationships.
- Work as an essential expression of identity and personality *e.g.* vocations (callings) and talents; could priests or musicians, artists *etc.* be as fulfilled without their 'work'?
- Work and the human condition; as a testament to a personal existence (objects outlive the maker), and mastery over the environment

Discussion

- The Internet and working from home: has the work environment (public sphere) spread into our home environment? (private sphere)
- Are humans compelled by nature or design to work? Is work a human 'state of nature', part of the human condition, or a consequence of economics?
- Is happiness in work determined by the economic system rather than the need or desire for work, or the nature of the work?
- Even if a life without work were desirable, is it possible, or does it require a way of life that we are not capable of living?

12. "The use of technology is the only way to save nature." Discuss and evaluate this claim.

This question admits several interpretations: that concepts of nature and technology are in harmony or in opposition, or that the former is under threat from, or impacted upon, by the latter.

Key points

- Definitions and conceptions of technology and nature; technology and nature as Other, as masculine/feminine ideals or personifications *e.g.* as rational/irrational, dominating/nurturing
- Technology as part of nature: the evolutionary model explaining the relationship between nature and technology (as a natural human expression), technology as a human modeling and harnessing of the laws and forces of nature, technology as a consequence of socializing
- Technology as a symptom of an economic system where the pursuit of pragmatic and material goals impact upon nature
- Evolutionary change analogy: the argument that change is constancy in nature, and that technology merely enhances the process.

Discussion

- The possibilities of biotechnologies cloning and preserving DNA of endangered species, and restoring extinct ones
- Is it the case that with or without modern technology, the detrimental impact of human society on nature would still occur?
- Would a different economic system lessen the threat or impact of technology on nature?
- Will genetically modified food feed the starving, or destroy established crops and their ecosystems?
- Green movements that reject all aspects of modern technological societies

Optional Theme 6: Philosophy of The Arts**13. “Nothing is less accessible to critique than works of art.” Do judgments on works of art have any relevance to art itself?**

The question is focused on the issue of aesthetic judgments. The critical judgment of a work of art can be considered as a case of aesthetic judgment in general. Therefore, answers could specifically refer to critique or, in a more general way, to aesthetic judgment itself. To some extent the discussion could comprise what the nature of art is.

Key points

- Art critics make judgments about the artistic merit of various kinds of artwork and attempt to give reasons for their judgments. This presupposes standards of some sort.
- An objectivist view of art holds that there are objective standards of some kind in terms of which art can be judged.
- The subjectivist position argues that aesthetic judgments are only expressions of personal or social preferences.
- ‘Formalism’ would maintain that art can be defined and judged only by criteria specific to art as such.
- A distinction between producing art and judging art could be drawn. Accordingly, it does not really matter who judges, only whether an aesthetic judgment adds something in some way to the work of art.

Discussion

- Do we have reliable knowledge concerning art? Are judgments about works of art objective, or are they purely personal and subjective?
- How are value judgments in the arts justified? How is ‘good art’ recognized or decided on? What are the justifications and implications of claiming that there are absolute standards for good art, or that the only standard for good art is individual taste?
- What is the role of the critic in judgment of the worth of art? What could be the role of the critic from a subjectivist point of view? From an objectivist?
- Discussions on art judgments involving terms such as ‘beauty’ and ‘taste’ are incapable of leading to any definitive conclusions since the terms themselves are too imprecise.
- Have critics any right to demand acceptance by the artist of any kind of criteria?

14. “Real beauty is a reflection of nature, and real art is mainly a way to get closer to nature.” Critically examine this statement.

The quotation includes at least two statements referring to the nature of beauty and the function of art, but it could be read in different ways combining these elements. Therefore, as the main issue is a very general one, the relation of art-nature can be approached in many different ways.

Key points

- Some of Henry Moore’s sculptures seem to be like rocks on a seashore, and in fact, they are exhibited among rocks.
- Natural manifestations appear to be preferred as beautiful objects.
- Contemplation of nature could be seen as the basic type of aesthetic experience, an experience of the sublime. The sublime names experiences like violent storms or huge mountains, which seem to overwhelm us.
- Contemplation of nature can, however, be shaped in other forms, for instance the vision of a sunset, or a lake.
- Aesthetic experience of nature fully represents aesthetic experience as such, presenting some of its main features: detachment and disinterest.
- In the aesthetic experience nature appears to us as ‘purposive without purpose’.

Discussion

- What is the origin and nature of a sense of beauty? Is this sense specific to the individual or to the culture, or is it universal?
- What is the proper function of the arts: to capture a perception of reality, to teach or uplift the mind, to express emotion, to create beauty, to bind a community together or to praise a spiritual power? Are there other functions omitted here?
- The preference for nature in art is increasing because of economic and social characteristics of modern world.
- The role of nature in art shows that art is originally a religious phenomenon.

Optional Theme 7: Philosophy of Religion

15. To what extent is it possible to believe in science and in the existence of God? Discuss.

This question allows the candidate to explore the seemingly polar positions of science and religion and whether they are on either end of the spectrum or, conversely, are compatible in ordinary people without any obvious contradictions.

Key points

- Science as an explanation of natural phenomenon and existence of God as a metaphysical assumption
- Scientific language is precise and accurate; religious language is based on metaphors and analogies.
- The role of faith is decisive in religion but is not necessary in science.
- The degree to which science and religion are not necessarily incompatible; religion and science both claim that there is order in the universe.

Discussion

- The real life experience of scientists who have religious beliefs
- The historical problem of some religious perceptions of science compared to, for example, Indian science and religion which are highly compatible.
- The nature of the universe and ultimate questions that have no answers, allowing the existence of God and God's activity in some form – the clock builder and setter.
- Pascal's wager showing that scientists could take the 'best' option
- The role of God and science in society in that they perform different functions and have different 'stories' that explain and support experience.

16. Divinity is often represented by images and symbols. Does the use of religious images and symbols distract or help us in understanding the divine?

The aim of this question is to direct the attention to the nature of the relation between man and divinity, particularly from the point of view of the human understanding of both it and religious language. From this point of view, an analysis of rational arguments could also be included as relevant. Symbols could refer to any physical support including words.

Key points

- In this context, symbols can be understood as the presence of something or somebody absent. Religious symbols relate to a possible presence of the divinity.
- From some perspectives, to acquire knowledge of this world, the human mind must determine concepts by means of experiences; religious symbols open to the human mind the possibility of a world which goes beyond the immediate experience.
- Religious symbols are related to representations of the individual or social imagination which can not be totally explained in conceptual or rational terms.
- Terms can be understood analogously, when we speak of God. God is not literally a father but is like a father.

Discussion

- Although one can accept the possibility of rational argumentation on God and religion, the fact that we are not pure rational minds, but are finite, embodied creatures, also makes it necessary that God and religious contents are represented by means accessible to our senses and emotions.
- Examination of the problems of religious language can be an opportunity to analyze the grounds of religious knowledge.
- What is the nature and limitation of religious language? Is it different to any other form of language or can it be related to other forms, *e.g.* some forms of poetic language? Does mysticism need symbols?
- The discussion could be related to the main topics of the philosophy of religion, such as arguments for God's existence, or religion as belief or institution.
- Religious symbols are a way to overcome the 'leap' of faith.
- Can we legitimately use ordinary language to talk about God that is beyond human comprehension? If God is said to lie beyond all limitations of our finite understanding, then God cannot be caught in the web of our human words and concepts? Do symbols fulfill the function which words cannot?

Optional Theme 8: Theories and Problems of Ethics

17. “In moral issues the better argument should prevail over the exercise of power or the force of personality. ” Can this statement be justified as an absolute ethical imperative?

The most general issue of the question is the opposition between force and moral right. The opposite view of morality would be expressed by the formula ‘might makes right.’ The expectation is to go beyond description to analysis of an ethical imperative. The statement can be interpreted as meta-ethical; it could also refer to conditions of moral argumentation.

Key points

- The quotation assumes that moral problems are capable of being solved in a rational and cognitive way. This is against a moral skepticism, which asserts that questions of practical reason could not be decided on rational grounds.
- Force really matters, even in moral issues. In Thrasymachus’ account, justice is defined as the strong crushing the weak for their own gain, and for Nietzsche, the powerful have a natural right to rule.
- Some points which could be considered: (a) different conceptions of rationality, instrumentalism, majoritarianism, Kantian idea of practical reason; (b) to identify rationality with scientific rationality would be to beg the question of the cognitive status of value arguments.
- Respect for the better argument is respect for the rule of law.
- A more popular version of the statement: what the others are saying could be right. This ideal is very difficult to achieve.
- The rule of argument and rationality expresses and contributes to social cooperation, which is not a weakness but a strength for a society.

Discussion

- Rational discussion of moral matters can have sense only if the person involved already has a commitment to moral values and a belief in the value of rationality.
- It could be held that in a different sense of right, the strong person who refuses to do the conventionally moral thing and who refuses to argue is, in fact, the moral person.
- An important question about value judgments is not how rational they are, but why it is good to be rational.
- How much practical relevance does ethics need?

18. Are moral values necessarily, and without exception, dependent on ends? Critically evaluate.

The question introduces the candidate to a very basic issue as to whether there are things that are intrinsically good (as opposed to and/or in addition to being instrumentally good) which is part of the general issue of the nature of moral values.

Key points

- Different approaches to moral thinking can be analysed: self-realization, which takes happiness as the goal of life, the teleological ethics of utilitarianism, the ethics of duty.
- Moral values can be distinguished from other kinds of values *e.g.* economic, aesthetic, *etc.*
- Moral values could be ‘relative’ in the sense of being relational but the term ‘relative’ here is not meant in the sense of subjectively either correct or incorrect.
- The properties that make a thing good or bad vary with each kind of item according to its particular purpose or function, though all are alike in being good for the same general functional reason, that each does what it was meant to do. In general, what makes something good or bad? Is there any common property?
- While one thing may be good for the sake of some particular end, that end may itself be a means to some further end, and so on and so on. Does the means-end chain go on forever or does it come to rest, and if so, where?
- On the other hand, Aristotle thinks that “happiness by itself is sufficient to render life desirable and lacking in nothing”.

Discussion

- Perhaps the traditional distinction between things of intrinsic value versus things of an instrumental value could be a questionable distinction: *i.e.* the object for itself (for example happiness or knowledge) often rewards me and thus other people as well.
 - Is happiness always an intrinsic good? Is the pleasure the sadist enjoys intrinsically good? Are only pleasures and happiness intrinsically good?
 - Are virtue and knowledge only instrumentally good? Or is knowledge an intrinsic good? Or is it both? And what about loyalty and generosity?
 - Perhaps the human purpose or function is as Plato and Aristotle thought, to do what people do best or uniquely. Human purpose on this view would be to fulfill human nature or potential. That might include thinking rationally and creating art, and these activities do sound like good ones for people.
 - According to some positions, moral values are universal, absolute, and invariable, applying to everyone and in all circumstances.
 - Some values are not dependent upon ends, *e.g.* the value of human dignity, a person should never be treated as a means to an end, however worthy that end could be.
-