

BA EXAMINATION 2009

for Internal Students

This paper is also taken by Combined Studies Students

**PHILOSOPHY**

Optional subject (p): Phenomenology

**Friday, 1 May 2009: 2.30pm-5.30pm**

Answer THREE questions. You must answer questions on at least TWO philosophers. Avoid overlap in your answers.

1. Explain and evaluate Husserl's view that the philosopher must bracket the 'natural attitude'.
2. What does Husserl understand by 'apodictic evidence', and how successful is his search for it?
3. '[T]he word intentionality signifies nothing else than this universal fundamental property of consciousness: to be conscious of something; as a *cogito* to bear within itself its *cogitatum*' (Husserl). Discuss.
4. Outline and evaluate Husserl's account, in the Fifth Cartesian Meditation, of our experience of other minds.
5. 'Although Heidegger's *Being and Time* does not often explicitly refer to Husserl, it can be understood as a thoroughgoing rejection of Husserl's conception of phenomenology.' Discuss.
6. EITHER (a) How does readiness-to-hand differ from presentness-at-hand? Is this distinction philosophically significant?  
OR (b) Is Heidegger best described as a realist, an idealist, or neither?
7. What is authenticity according to Heidegger? Should we aspire to it?
8. What is the 'question of Being' and does Heidegger succeed in answering it?

**TURN OVER**

9. Does Sartre adequately justify his central claims concerning the nature of consciousness?
10. 'Bad faith, as Sartre explains it, is an irremediably paradoxical notion.' Discuss.
11. If each for-itself is, as Sartre claims, a 'non-substantial absolute', how is it possible for one for-itself to affect another?
12. Explain and evaluate Sartre's thesis that human freedom is 'unconditioned'.
13. Does Merleau-Ponty refute empiricism?
14. What, according to Merleau-Ponty, is wrong with 'objective thought'? Are his objections convincing?
15. To what extent does Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology pursue the same aims as contemporary cognitive science?
16. EITHER (a) What is Merleau-Ponty's response to the problem of solipsism? Is it adequate?  
OR (b) What view of human freedom does Merleau-Ponty recommend? Should we accept it in preference to that of Sartre?
17. What limits does Levinas place on human responsibility? Can these boundaries be defended?
18. What does Levinas' argument that 'the other is revealed by the face' try to achieve? Does it succeed?
19. EITHER (a) Is Levinas right that technology promotes justice and altruism?  
OR (b) Does Levinas succeed in showing that the moral life consists in 'becoming other'?
20. 'Transcendence disturbs the surface of the world' (Levinas). Discuss.

**END OF PAPER**