

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

BA EXAMINATIONS 2001

for Internal Students

This paper is also taken by Combined Studies students.

PHILOSOPHY

Greek Philosophy from the beginnings to Aristotle

Candidates should answer three questions, of which at least TWO should be from Section B.

SECTION A

1. Is Heraclitus' theory of flux self-refuting?
2. In what sense, if any, was EITHER Parmenides OR Zeno a monist?
3. Were the ancient atomists sceptics? To be consistent, should they have been?
4. Give a critical analysis of any ONE Sophistic argument that contradiction is impossible.

SECTION B

5. Give a critical analysis of the following passage:

... we say, do we not, that there is such a thing as equal, not of stick with stick, or of stone with stone, but that, over and above all these there is something else, equal itself? Should we say this?

We should, by Zeus, replied Simmias, amazingly so.

And do we know it, what it is?

To be sure, he said.

And whence did we obtain this knowledge? Did we not see material things, such as sticks and stones, and get in mind from them that equal which is different from them? Or does it not seem different to you? Look at the matter again in this way: Do not the same sticks or stones appear equal to one, and not to another?

That is certain.

But are the equals themselves ever unequal? Or is equality ever inequality?

Never, Socrates.

Then these equals are not the same as the equal itself?

TURN OVER

I should say, clearly not, Socrates.

And yet from these equals, although differing from that equal, you got the knowledge of that one in mind?

Very true, he said.

Which might be like, or might be unlike them?

Yes.

But that makes no difference; whenever from seeing one thing you conceived another, whether like or unlike, there must surely have been an act of recollection? Plato, *Phaedo* 74

6. In the *Phaedo* Socrates claims that the soul is immortal just if it is incomposite. Later, in the *Republic* Socrates claims that the soul is tripartite. Should he therefore conclude that the soul is mortal?

7. Can Plato's rulers know how to rule?

8. EITHER (a) Could Socrates' suggestion that forms are thoughts serve as a defence against Parmenides' attack on the theory of forms?

OR (b) Does the Third Man Argument refute the theory of forms?

9. EITHER (a) Does Plato succeed in refuting Protagoras' doctrine that Man is the Measure of all things?

OR (b) Does Plato solve the problems about the possibility of false judgement raised in the *Theaetetus*?

10. Explain and assess EITHER the method of collection and division demonstrated in the *Sophist* OR the method of hypothesis as it is described in dialogues like the *Meno*, *Phaedo* and *Republic*?

11. What similarities are there between the ontologies of the *Timaeus* and *Philebus*? What might these dialogues suggest for the development of Plato's theory of Forms?

12. In the *Categories*, what makes a primary substance primary?

13. Give a critical analysis of the following passage:

Why should not nature work, not for the sake of something, nor because it is better so, but just as the sky rains, not in order to make the corn grow, but of necessity? What is drawn up must cool, and what has been cooled must become water and descend, the result of this being that the corn grows. Similarly if a man's crop is spoiled on the threshing-floor, the rain did not fall for the sake of this - in order that the

crop might be spoiled - but that result just followed. Why then should it not be the same with the parts in nature, e.g. that our teeth should come up of necessity - the front teeth sharp, fitted for tearing, the molars broad and useful for grinding down the food - since they did not arise for this end, but it was merely a coincident result; and so with all other parts in which we suppose that there is purpose? Wherever then all the parts came about just what they would have been if they had come be for an end, such things survived, being organized spontaneously in a fitting way; whereas

those which grew otherwise perished and continue to perish, as Empedocles says his 'man-faced ox-progeny' did. Such are the arguments (and others of the kind) which may cause difficulty on this point. Yet it is impossible that this should be the true view. For teeth and all other natural things either invariably or normally come about in a given way; but of not one of the results of chance or spontaneity is this true. (Aristotle, Physics II.8)

14. In *Metaphysics* VII.3, Aristotle argues that matter cannot be the primary kind of substance because it does not meet the requirements of being (i) a this or (ii) separate (or separable). What does Aristotle mean by (i) and (ii)? And how does Aristotle's primary substance satisfy these requirements?

15. What part is played by the notions of matter and form in Aristotle's conception of the soul-body relation?

16. EITHER (a) Does Aristotle give a satisfactory account of our conceptual knowledge as derived from perception?

OR (b) In Aristotle's account of perception, what is it to receive perceptible form without matter?

17. 'The introduction of nous (intellect) in the final chapter of the *Posterior Analytics* is a last-minute sell-out to rationalism". Discuss.

18. Does Aristotle have a coherent defence of the possibility of possibility?

END OF PAPER