

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

BA EXAMINATION 2006

for Internal Students

This paper is also taken by Combined Studies Students

PHILOSOPHY

Optional subject (k): Post-Aristotelian Philosophy

Answer THREE questions. Avoid overlap in your answers.

1. Evaluate the Epicureans' reasons for supposing that perceptible objects are made up of atoms, and atoms of minima.
2. What motivated the Stoic doctrine of eternal recurrence? Were the Stoics able to solve the philosophical problems it implied?
3. How convincing are the Stoics' arguments that the world is providentially ordered?
4. EITHER (a) How convincing is the Epicurean claim that 'reason is in its entirety the product of the senses'?
- OR (b) How convincing is the Epicurean claim that 'all sensations are true'?
5. The Stoics defined a cognitive impression as 'one which arises from what is and is stamped and impressed exactly in accordance with what is, of such a kind as could not arise from what is not'. Critically discuss this definition.
6. EITHER (a) According to the 'Lazy Argument' if all things are fated, then (for example) there is no point in my going to see the doctor, because it is already fated whether I will recover from my illness. How successful were the Stoics in their attempts to refute this argument?
- OR (b) Why do the Stoics think that determinism is compatible with moral responsibility?
7. EITHER (a) Can the Pyrrhonian sceptic live his scepticism?
- OR (b) To what extent is the Sceptic's tranquillity the consequence of his suspension of judgement?

TURN OVER

8. Give a critical assessment of the theory of emotion of EITHER (a) the Stoics OR (b) the Epicureans.
9. EITHER (a) How far is Stoic ethics dependent on the Stoic view of nature?
OR (b) How does the Stoic theory of *oikeiosis* attempt to explain why we act for the sake of others?
10. 'Epicurean ethics focuses its attention on freedom from pain rather than positive pleasure. A life totally free from pain, however, is the life of a corpse, as Cicero commented.' Discuss.
11. How successful is Alexander of Aphrodisias' critique of Stoic determinism in *On Fate*?
12. EITHER (a) How would Plotinus answer the question 'Can we understand the One?'
OR (b) In what sense does Plotinus think the One is free? What does this freedom have in common with the freedom possessed by humans?
13. In *Ennead* III.7 Plotinus concludes, 'Time is the life of soul in a movement of passage from one way of life to another.' Discuss what he means by this.
14. Outline and assess Plotinus' response to a Stoic account of beauty.
15. Explain Plotinus' distinction between 'political' virtue and 'greater' virtue. Does this distinction commit Plotinus to saying that the man of greater virtue does not perform the conventional moral actions?
16. 'Why, if everything comes from the One, is the One not responsible for evil?' How does EITHER (a) Plotinus OR (b) Proclus answer this question?
17. Evaluate Philoponus' arguments against the eternity of the world, focusing on EITHER (a) his criticism of Aristotle OR (b) his response to Proclus.
18. Does Porphyry succeed in showing that animals are rational and therefore should not be sacrificed and eaten?
19. Were the Neoplatonists able to explain how an immortal, immaterial soul can interact with a physical body?
20. Explain the Neoplatonic theory of cosmic sympathy and then show how this theory plays an important role EITHER (a) in Neoplatonic cosmology OR (b) in Neoplatonic embryology.

END OF PAPER