

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

M.Phil. EXAMINATION

for Internal Students

PHILOSOPHY

Davidson

Monday, 8 May 2006: 10.00 – 13.00

Candidates should answer **THREE** of the following **THIRTEEN** questions, avoiding overlap in their answers, also between papers.

1. Expound and assess Davidson's argument for the anomalism of the mental.
2. 'I accept Quine's thesis of the inscrutability of reference and therefore of the indeterminacy of translation' (Davidson). Explain and assess.
3. Why does Davidson think that akrasia poses a philosophical problem? Are his views on the issue compelling?
4. 'While Tarski intended to analyze the concept of truth by appealing (in Convention T) to the concept of meaning, I have the reverse in mind' (Davidson). Explain and assess.
5. How convincing are Davidson's reasons for thinking that a unified theory of thought and action is possible?
6. Expound and assess the role that triangulation plays in Davidson's later account of reference.
7. 'Since many metaphorical uses of language lack truth conditions, Davidson's account of metaphor is unacceptable.' Discuss.
8. 'Sentences like "Snow is white", that do not involve indexical or demonstrative elements, can have different truth conditions in different contexts. But sentence meaning is stable across contexts. So Davidson is wrong about sentence meaning.' How should Davidson respond to this challenge?
9. What is Davidson's argument for the claim that there is no such thing as a language? Is it convincing?
10. Critically assess Davidson's treatment of self-knowledge.
11. Does Davidson provide a satisfactory response to any form of scepticism?
12. How does Davidson relate being good and being desirable? Is he right?
13. Does Davidson's theory of action leave out the agent?

END OF PAPER