

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
MPHIL EXAMINATIONS 2001
for internal students

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PLATO

Monday 14th May 2001: 10:00 – 1:00

Candidates should answer THREE of the following questions. Please avoid overlap in your answers.

1. 'Is virtue a single entity, with justice and temperance and piety as its parts?' Explain the significance of this question for the Protagoras.
2. 'The Socratic elenchus can only provide a successful philosophical methodology if it is understood in terms of ethical principles.' Discuss.
3. 'Since there is no contradiction in Simmias being larger than Socrates and smaller than Phaedo, there is no need for forms of largeness and smallness.' Discuss.
4. Evaluate the respective roles played by the Form of the Good and by other Forms in the Republic's account of knowledge.
5. Can Plato offer a coherent account of the spirited part of the soul?
6. 'If one of us is somebody's master or somebody's slave, he is surely not a slave of master itself – of what a master is – nor is the master a master of slave itself – of what a slave is. On the contrary, being a human being, he is a master or slave of a human being. Mastery itself, on the other hand, is what it is of slavery itself; and, in the same way, slavery itself is slavery of mastery itself' (Parmenides133e). How damaging is this argument to the theory of Forms?

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7. In the Theaetetus, why does the proposal that knowledge is true judgement with a logos (account) fail? How, if at all, could it be rescued?
8. 'To divide by kinds and not to think the same form is different nor a different one the same: shall we not say that this belongs to expertise in dialectic?' (Sophist 253d1-3). How should this description of dialectical expertise be understood?
9. To what question is the receptacle of becoming in the Timaeus posited as an answer? Is the answer successful?

10. Are Plato's accounts of the method of collection and division consistent?
11. Evaluate Socrates' argument in the Philebus that reason should be placed in the class of cause.
12. Does Plato have a good argument to show that pleasure is not the good?

END OF PAPER