
PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY (PRINCIPAL)

9774/02

Paper 2 Topics and Key Texts in Philosophy and Theology 1

May/June 2019

2 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.

Write your centre number, candidate number and name on the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, glue or correction fluid.

DO NOT WRITE IN ANY BARCODES.

Choose **one** of Topics 1 to 4.

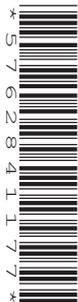
Answer **two** questions.

You must answer **both** parts of the question in Section A and **one** question from Section B for the Topic you have chosen.

You should divide your time equally between the questions you attempt.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.



Choose **one** of Topics 1 to 4.

Answer **two** questions.

You must answer **both** parts of the question in Section A and **one** question from Section B for the Topic you have chosen.

You should divide your time equally between the questions you attempt.

Topic 1 Epistemology

Answer Question 1 **and** either Question 2 **or** Question 3.

Section A

PHILONOUS: I deny that I agreed with you in those notions that led to scepticism. You indeed said, the *reality* of sensible things consisted in *an absolute existence out of the minds of spirits*, or distinct from their being perceived. And pursuant to this notion of reality, *you* are obliged to deny sensible things any real existence: that is, according to your own definition, you profess yourself a sceptic. But I neither said nor thought the reality of sensible things was to be defined after that manner. To me it is evident for the reasons you allow of, that sensible things cannot exist otherwise than in a mind or spirit. Whence I conclude, not that they have no real existence, but that, seeing they depend not on my thought, and have an existence distinct from being perceived by me, *there must be some other mind wherein they exist*. As sure, therefore, as the sensible world really exists, so sure is there an infinite omnipresent Spirit who contains and supports it.

[Extract from **George Berkeley**, *Dialogue 2*]

- 1 (a) With reference to the above passage, explain Berkeley's argument that 'sensible things cannot exist otherwise than in a mind or spirit'. [10]
- (b) Critically examine the role of God in Berkeley's idealism. [15]

Section B

- 2 'Empiricism does not provide a successful account of our understanding of the world.' Evaluate this claim. [25]

OR

- 3 'Neither coherentism nor reliabilism offers adequate justification for our beliefs about the world.' Critically assess this view. [25]

Topic 2 Philosophical and Theological Language

Answer Question 4 **and** either Question 5 **or** Question 6.

Section A

I wish to make it clear that I shall not try to defend Christianity in particular, but religion in general – not because I do not believe in Christianity, but because you cannot understand what Christianity is, until you have understood what religion is.

... A certain lunatic is convinced that all dons want to murder him. His friends introduce him to all the mildest and most respectable dons that they can find, and after each of them has retired, they say, 'You see, he doesn't really want to murder you; he spoke to you in a most cordial manner; surely you are convinced now?' But the lunatic replies, 'Yes, but that was only his diabolical cunning; he's really plotting against me the whole time, like the rest of them; I know it I tell you.' However many kindly dons are produced, the reaction is still the same.

... Let us call that in which we differ from this lunatic, our respective *bliks*. He has an insane *blik* about dons; we have a sane one. It is important to realize that we have a sane one, not no *blik* at all; for there must be two sides to any argument – if he has a wrong *blik*, then those who are right about dons must have a right one. Flew has shown that a *blik* does not consist in an assertion or system of them; but nevertheless it is very important to have the right *blik*.

[Extract from **Basil Mitchell**, *The Philosophy of Religion*: Chapter I
'Theology and Falsification' (RM Hare)]

- 4 (a) With reference to this passage, explain Hare's view that religious statements are non-cognitive *bliks*. [10]
- (b) 'Hare's theory of *bliks* solves none of the problems of religious language.' Critically assess this claim. [15]

Section B

- 5 Critically examine the debate about the meaning of the word 'good' in moral statements. [25]

OR

- 6 Evaluate the view that religious language is mythological. [25]

Topic 3 Philosophy of Religion

Answer Question 7 **and** either Question 8 **or** Question 9.

Section A

Our 'solution', then, to this baffling problem of excessive and undeserved suffering is a frank appeal to the positive value of mystery. Such suffering remains unjust and inexplicable, haphazard and cruelly excessive. The mystery of dysteleological suffering is a real mystery, impenetrable to the rationalizing human mind. It challenges Christian faith with its utterly baffling, alien, destructive meaningfulness. And yet at the same time, detached theological reflection can note that this very irrationality and this lack of ethical meaning contribute to the character of the world as a place in which true human goodness can occur and in which loving sympathy and compassionate self-sacrifice can take place. 'Thus, paradoxically,' as H.H. Farmer says, 'the failure of theism to solve all mysteries becomes part of its case!'

My general conclusion, then, is that this world, with all its unjust and apparently wasted suffering, may nevertheless be what the Irenaean strand of Christian thought affirms that it is, namely a divinely created sphere of soul-making. But if this is so, yet further difficult questions now arise. A vale of soul-making that successfully makes persons of the desired quality may perhaps be justified by this result. But if the soul-making purpose fails, there can surely be no justification for 'the heavy and the weary weight of all this unintelligible world'. [Wordsworth] And yet, so far as we can see, the soul-making process does in fact fail in our own world at least as often as it succeeds.

At this point, a further, eschatological, dimension of Christian belief becomes importantly relevant ...

[Extract from **John Hick**, *Evil and the God of Love*: Chapter XV 'Soul-making and Mystery']

- 7 (a) With reference to this passage and to Hick's ideas about pain and suffering, explain Hick's argument about the positive value of mystery. [10]
- (b) Critically assess Hick's claim that this world may be 'a divinely created sphere of soul-making'. [15]

Section B

- 8 Critically examine design arguments for the existence of God. [25]

OR

- 9 Evaluate Hume's arguments for rejecting miracles. [25]

Topic 4 New Testament: The Four Gospels

Answer Question 10 **and** either Question 11 **or** Question 12.

Section A

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ²And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. ⁵But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. ⁷Then go quickly and tell his disciples, "He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him." This is my message for you.' ⁸So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹Suddenly Jesus met them and said, 'Greetings!' And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.'

[Matthew 28: 1–10]

- 10 (a)** Examine the significance of this passage for an understanding of Jesus' resurrection. [10]
- (b)** 'The narratives of Jesus' resurrection show that he rose from the dead.' Critically assess this claim. [15]

Section B

- 11** Evaluate the claim that Jesus' miracles are about fact, not faith. [25]

OR

- 12** Critically examine teachings in the gospels about discipleship. [25]

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