

# Markscheme

**May 2025**

**Philosophy**

**Higher level and standard level**

**Paper 2**

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## How to use the Diploma Programme Philosophy markscheme

The assessment markbands constitute the formal tool for marking examination scripts, and in these assessment markbands examiners can see the skills being assessed in the examinations. The markschemes are designed to assist examiners in possible routes taken by students in terms of the content of their answers when demonstrating their skills of doing philosophy through their responses. The points listed are not compulsory points, and not necessarily the best possible points. They are a framework to help examiners contextualize the requirements of the question, and to facilitate the application of marks according to the assessment markbands listed on page 4 for part A responses, and page 5 for part B responses.

It is important that examiners understand that the main idea of the course is to promote *doing* philosophy, and this involves activity and engagement throughout a two-year programme, as opposed to emphasizing the chance to display knowledge in a terminal set of examination papers. Even in the examinations, responses should not be assessed on how much students *know* as much as how they are able to use their knowledge in support of an argument, using the skills referred to in the various assessment markbands published in the subject guide, reflecting an engagement with philosophical activity throughout the course. As a tool intended to help examiners in assessing responses, the following points should be kept in mind when using a markscheme:

- The Diploma Programme Philosophy course is designed to encourage the skills of *doing* philosophy in the students. These skills can be accessed through reading the assessment markbands in the subject guide
- The markscheme does not intend to outline a model/correct answer
- The markscheme has an introductory paragraph which contextualizes the emphasis of the question being asked
- The bullet points below the paragraph are suggested possible points of development that should not be considered a prescriptive list but rather an indicative list where they might appear in the answer
- If there are names of philosophers and references to their work incorporated into the markscheme, this should help to give context for the examiners and does not reflect a requirement that such philosophers and references should appear in an answer: They are possible lines of development.
- Students can legitimately select from a wide range of ideas, arguments and concepts in service of the question they are answering, and it is possible that students will use material effectively that is *not* mentioned in the markscheme
- Examiners should be aware of the command terms for Philosophy as published in the Philosophy subject guide when assessing responses
- In markschemes for Paper 2 there is a greater requirement for specific content as the Paper requires the study of a text by the students and the questions set will derive from that text. The markscheme will show what is relevant for both part A and part B answers. In part B responses, students may select other material they deem as relevant
- Responses for part A and part B should be assessed using the distinct assessment markbands.

### Note to examiners

Students at both Higher Level and Standard Level answer **one** question on the prescribed texts. Each question consists of two parts, and students must answer both parts of the question (a and b).

**Paper 2 part A markbands**

This task requires students to answer a two-part question on the prescribed text that they have studied in-depth in class. Students are presented with a choice of two questions per text and must answer both part A and part B of their selected question. For this task, students are permitted to have access to a clean/non-annotated copy of the prescribed text throughout the examination. It is expected that students will make explicit references to this text in their responses.

Part A question requires students to explain a specified concept, issue or argument from the prescribed text. It is expected that students will include explicit references to the text to support their explanation.

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little understanding of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is demonstrated. Philosophical vocabulary is not used, or is consistently used inappropriately.</li> <li>• The explanation of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is minimal. Points made are superficial and frequently unclear. There are few, if any, references to the text.</li> </ul>
3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A basic understanding of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is demonstrated. Philosophical vocabulary is used, but often inappropriately.</li> <li>• The explanation of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is basic and underdeveloped. Points are often imprecise or vague, and it is often unclear what the response is trying to convey. There are occasional references to the text.</li> </ul>
5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some understanding of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is demonstrated. Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately.</li> <li>• There is a satisfactory explanation of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text, although the explanation lacks clarity and development in places. Relevant points are made but lack accuracy and detail. Specific references to the text are made, although these are sometimes ineffective.</li> </ul>
7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good understanding of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is demonstrated. Philosophical vocabulary is used, mostly appropriately.</li> <li>• The explanation of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is clear, but is in need of further development. Points made are relevant and accurate but lack detail. There are specific references to the text.</li> </ul>
9–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very good understanding of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is demonstrated. There is accurate and precise use of philosophical vocabulary.</li> <li>• The explanation of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is clear and well developed. Points are relevant, accurate and detailed. There are specific and effective references to the text.</li> </ul>

**Paper 2 part B markbands**

Part B requires students to undertake a critical discussion of a specified concept, issue or argument from the prescribed text. As part A and part B of each question are based on the same specified concept, issue or argument from the prescribed text, students are not required to repeat explanatory material from their part A response.

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little understanding of and critical engagement with the specified concept/issue/argument from the prescribed text is demonstrated.</li> <li>• Philosophical vocabulary is not used or is consistently used inappropriately. Points are frequently inaccurate and unclear. There are few, if any, references to the text.</li> <li>• The response is descriptive. Any analysis present is superficial or incoherent. Examples are not included or are irrelevant. There is little or no discussion of different points of view. Where a conclusion is included, this is very superficial or is not consistent with the rest of the response.</li> </ul>
4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A basic understanding of and critical engagement with the specified concept/issue/argument from the prescribed text is demonstrated.</li> <li>• Philosophical vocabulary is used, but often inappropriately. Points are frequently imprecise or vague, and it is often unclear what the response is trying to convey. There are occasional references to the text.</li> <li>• There is limited analysis present and overall the response is more descriptive than analytical. Examples are included but are ineffective. There is limited discussion of different points of view. A simplistic conclusion is included.</li> </ul>
7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some understanding of and critical engagement with the specified concept/issue/argument from the prescribed text is demonstrated.</li> <li>• Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. Relevant points are made but lack accuracy and development. Specific references to the text are made, although these are sometimes ineffective.</li> <li>• The response contains analysis, although this analysis lacks development. Examples are included. There is some discussion of different points of view. A conclusion is included.</li> </ul>
10–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good understanding of and critical engagement with the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is demonstrated.</li> <li>• Philosophical vocabulary is used, mostly appropriately. Points made are relevant and accurate but lack detail. There are specific references to the text.</li> <li>• The response contains critical analysis, although this analysis lacks development. Examples are used to support the discussion. There is discussion of different points of view. The response argues to a conclusion that is consistent with the arguments presented.</li> </ul>
13–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very good understanding of and critical engagement with the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is demonstrated.</li> <li>• There is accurate and precise use of philosophical vocabulary. Points are relevant, accurate and detailed. There are specific and effective references to the text.</li> <li>• The response contains well-developed critical analysis. Relevant examples are used to support the discussion. There is critical discussion of different points of view. The response argues to a reasoned and clearly stated conclusion that is consistent with the arguments presented.</li> </ul>

**Alfred Jules Ayer: *Language, Truth and Logic***

1. (a) **Explain Ayer’s claim that there is no field of experience which cannot be brought under some form of scientific law.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Ayer’s claim that there is no field of experience which cannot be brought under some form of scientific law.** [15]

In Chapter 2, where Ayer analyses the function of philosophy, he asserts that “There is no field of experience which cannot, in principle, be brought under some form of scientific law, and no type of speculative knowledge about the world which it is, in principle, beyond the power of science to give”. This forms a central part of Ayer’s argument for the abandonment of metaphysics and the view that it is the task of the philosopher to construct a deductive system. Philosophy can show what the criteria are for determining the truth or falsity of a given proposition by means of observations that would justify the beliefs, but “whether the evidence is forthcoming or not is in every case a purely empirical question”. The only kind of justification that is necessary or possible for self-consistent empirical propositions is empirical verification. Some responses might challenge this position, countering with the important role that deductive reasoning has played in the construction of philosophical systems, and pointing out that without deductive reasoning philosophy would disappear. Other responses might counter that empirical verification requires the technical scientific apparatus specific to each case, whereas philosophy takes an all-encompassing view.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The claim that philosophy studies reality as a whole can be understood to mean that the philosopher is equally concerned with the content of each science
- Philosophy is not, in principle, more closely related to any one science than to any other
- Ayer’s opposition to the right of the philosopher to state certain first principles and then to present them with their consequences as a complete picture of reality
- The illustration through the system of Descartes. Descartes attempted to derive all human knowledge from premises whose truth was intuitively certain
- The only kind of justification necessary or possible for self-consistent empirical propositions is empirical verification.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- The search for first principles and the familiar conception of philosophy as the study of reality as a whole
- The extent to which this conception is difficult to criticize because it is so vague
- The metaphysical belief that “reality as a whole” is somehow generically different from the reality which is investigated piecemeal by the special sciences
- The extent to which philosophy can be constructed without deductive reasoning
- Experience and scientific laws in the context of cognitivist approaches, e.g. Dennett
- The diversity of scientific and philosophical approaches and methods, for example Kuhn and Popper
- The development of both philosophy and science shows that the boundaries are fluid, and their interrelationship is complex, for example, Midgley systems thinking and complexity
- The extent to which scientific hypotheses are more abstract, precise, and fruitful than philosophical statements.

2. (a) Explain Ayer’s analysis of the judgment that stealing money is wrong. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Ayer’s analysis of the judgment that stealing money is wrong. [15]

The judgement “stealing money is wrong” is a paradigmatic case of ethical statements. Ayer analyses its genesis and validity in order to develop his critique of ethics and explain his own position. His analysis begins by admitting that fundamental ethical concepts are unanalysable, in the sense that there is no criterion by which to test the validity of such judgments, which is consistent with the absolutist position. But unlike the absolutists, he proposes an explanation for this fact about ethical concepts: “We say that the reason why they are unanalysable is that they are mere pseudo-concepts”. This is because “there is nothing said here which can be true or false”, and when I say that a certain kind of action is right or wrong, I am not making a factual statement, “I am merely expressing certain moral sentiments”. They are unverifiable for the same reason that a cry of pain or a word of command is unverifiable—because they do not express genuine propositions. This type of position, which implies the impossibility of maintaining criteria for the validity of ethical judgements, can be challenged by various ethical approaches, including objectivist (e.g. Ayn Rand) or tradition-based (e.g. the Golden Rule) foundations.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Ayer’s third position beyond absolutism and naturalism
- “You acted wrongly in stealing that money” does not state anything more than “You stole that money”
- The distinction between descriptive and normative ethical statements
- The distinction between expressions and assertions of feeling
- We never dispute about questions of value but always about questions of fact.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Ayer’s statement “I am merely expressing certain moral sentiments“ is not an ethical statement when taken as fact. What would it be if taken as an ethical statement?
- Ayer asks too much of the basis of judgements, such as ethical judgements involving tradition, custom, he seeks a mathematical proof where only certainties of experience are possible
- The objection that Ayer’s view makes it impossible to argue about questions of value
- The extent to which a clear distinction between questions of value and questions of fact can be justified
- The extent to which ethical judgements can be justified by psychological or sociological explanations
- Discussion with objectivist (e.g. Rand), tradition-based positions (e.g. the Golden Rule) or other approaches (e.g. Anscombe, Foot, virtue ethics) on the possible basis of criteria for the validity of ethical judgements.

**Simone de Beauvoir: *The Second Sex*, Vol. 1 part 1, Vol. 2 part 1 and Vol. 2 part 4**

3. (a) Explain de Beauvoir’s idea about the path to gender equality. [10]

(b) Evaluate de Beauvoir’s idea about the path to gender equality. [15]

In *The Second Sex*, the author explores the complexities of gender relations, advocates for gender equality, and suggests that a future where men and women are equal can lead to more harmonious and fulfilling relationships between them. She emphasizes the importance of recognizing each other as equals while acknowledging and embracing their shared humanity. Simone de Beauvoir challenges the idea that the conflict between men and women is rooted in biology, arguing instead that it is a product of societal, upbringing and psychological factors. Turning to the realm of psychoanalysis, she suggests that women’s desire for equality is not a desire to castrate men but a complex aspiration to embrace both their own identity and the transcendence that men traditionally enjoy. The conflict between the sexes is not inherent but rather a result of societal expectations and historical developments. Women have been confined to immanence, while men aim to maintain their superiority and resist acknowledging women as equals. In her introduction to the woman as other, she explains that women “have gained only what men have been willing to grant; they have taken nothing, they have only received”.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The concept of gender inequality and its implications as an ethical and political dilemma
- The challenges that the economic conditions might impose both in men and women regarding gender equality
- The idea of a society where men and women are equals and how this is possible by achieving equal access to education, work, and rights
- The idea that societal influences and interventions have shaped the roles and behaviours of women throughout history
- The idea of the influence of upbringing regarding gender equality. How raising different human beings equally from a young age could lead to more harmonious and just relations between them
- How the path to gender equality is focused on the shared human condition, and that the differences between men and women, should not lead to inequality. They can recognize each other as equals human beings.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Challenge traditional concepts of femininity and masculinity
- Reflect on the concepts of equality and equity and their possible relations to the discussion of gender relations
- How societies could move beyond the current inequality situation and work toward true gender equality
- How gender equality must not only be understood from the perspective of the relation between men and women, but also from the intersectionality perspective within
- The challenges that the current gender developments impose to the comprehension of the issue, e.g. agender persons, fluid-genre individuals, etc. Students might draw on from Judith Butler, Monique Wittig and/or Jack Halberstam, among others
- The influence that religions and other systems of belief plays in gender issues
- The influence that economics and work conditions play in gender issues, e.g. the glass-ceiling metaphor, etc.
- The relations between individual freedom and rights with social duties and possibilities, regarding equality and equity.

4. (a) Explain de Beauvoir’s idea of the independent woman. [10]
- (b) Evaluate de Beauvoir’s idea of the independent woman. [15]

In Chapter 14 of *The Second Sex* the author delves into the concept of women’s independence and the challenges they face in striving for autonomy. It discusses the desire of many women to attain independence, self-sufficiency, and the ability to make choices about their own lives. It also acknowledges that society often resists women’s efforts to become independent. Patriarchal norms and expectations can hinder women from breaking free from traditional roles. While women may seek freedom and self-determination, they can also experience loneliness and isolation, and that is the independence paradox. Financial autonomy is a significant aspect of achieving freedom from male dominance. But also, psychological, and emotional autonomy is necessary. The author also explores the challenges and opportunities that marriage and motherhood could impose in the path towards independence. This quest is challenging, but it is worth pursuing. Achieving independence requires determination and resilience. Collective action, education and unity can help overcome societal obstacles. She concludes that ‘what is beyond doubt is that until now women’s possibilities have been stifled and lost to humanity, and in her and everyone’s interest it is high time she be left to take her own chances’.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- How despite legal and civic advancements for women, true independence remains elusive without economic autonomy, that allow them to be free from male dominance and societal constraints
- The role that access to quality work plays in the pursuing of independence and equality. Work as a bridge that could close the gap between women and men
- How despite political reformations, e.g. the right to vote that allows more freedom to women, there are still others societal constraints enforced, e.g. issues around reproductive rights
- How the sense of self and responsibility plays a key role in the process of becoming an independent person
- How women’s work does not guarantee freedom, especially in a world where many workers are exploited
- How social structures and traditions still reflects male values and norms.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- The challenges faced by intellectual women who challenge traditional gender roles
- The notion that women in artistic professions often enjoy a degree of independence and success that reinforces their femininity. However, that also presents risks of self-indulgence and vanity in such professions.
- The view that women, due to their marginalized status in society, often bring a unique perspective in literature and art
- The role that the access to creative work by women has played in the path to becoming independent
- The inequality of assessment between artistic work made by men and by women
- The idea that creativity requires freedom, solitude, and the ability to transcend one’s immediate surroundings; how women have historically been denied these conditions necessary for creative exploration
- It is still the case that girls are often conditioned to believe they have limited capabilities compared to boys, leading to self-doubt and a sense of inferiority?
- The idea that societal perceptions of women’s abilities and roles play a significant role in their success or failure
- Students might also draw on from other thinkers as Judith Butler, Monique Wittig, Martha Nussbaum and/or Jack Halberstam, among others.

**Confucius: *The Analects***

5. (a) Explain Confucius’s character of a *junzi* (ruler’s son, “gentleman”, or “superior person”). [10]
- (b) Evaluate Confucius’s character of a *junzi* (ruler’s son, “gentleman”, or “superior person”). [15]

This question seeks for an explanation and evaluation of the character and nature of a *junzi*, a gentleman who Confucius claims to be the goal of all humans. Such a person has a certain nature and attributes that Confucius regards highly. A gentleman is trustworthy, humble, sincere, compassionate, and righteous. A *junzi* can also inspire others to improve themselves, starting a chain of moral development that, eventually, leads to social harmony. Central to a gentleman’s behaviour is the pursuit of self-realization from which will come moral perfection. “From the Son of Heaven on down to commoners, all without exception should regard self-cultivation as the root.” This self-realization and virtue are brought about by reflection on past experiences and learning from these experiences so that the person can become more humane (*jen/ren*) (6.26) Key behaviours become essential, and these include practicing rituals without variation (3.17) (the substituting of a sheep ... is not approved of). The seeking of virtue becomes essential with all its manners and careful use of words. Words do not remain sufficient, and a gentleman must be seen to be a person of action (4.24). The *junzi* knows how to act not for their own gain and to be cultured (*wen*) but not to the same level as a sage (*sheng(ren)*). Equally there is acceptance of one’s fate. The gentleman is above the petty person (*xiaoren*; “petty person”), as he can seek virtue. The development of gentlemen might be seen as creating a flourishing human community.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- The seeking of virtue as a root to being a gentleman within a wider society
- The enactment of rituals and rites; the nature and acceptance of fate or destiny
- The social consequences if all people try to become a gentleman; is it possible for all to do so?
- The role of rulers if they are a gentleman
- Qualities of humaneness and ways to achieve self-realization
- The prime differences between ‘petty people’ (commoners) the gentlemen and the sage.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- The ability of humans to seek becoming gentlemen given the possible fundamental nature of humans and the degree to which a gentlemen can survive in a market driven society. Is his character one of a person of a saint?
- The nature of self-realization when Confucian mentality might negate the desire to promote self-hood over and above the aims of the wider community
- The degree to which rituals and rights can change the nature of humans
- Filial piety and the nature of the gentlemen. Are they truly compatible?
- The balancing act of the gentleman being virtuous and being a man of action
- The degree to which Plato’s philosopher ruler was highly educated and rational while the Confucian gentlemen reflects pragmatism and precedence to control behaviour and guide decisions. Rational analysis against habit
- Are the perceived qualities of the *junzi* to be valued *cf* a Nietzschean view of human characteristics?
- Is such a social hierarchy suggested by the existence of gentlemen and petty people desirable?

6. (a) Explain Confucius's views on virtue. [10]

(b) Evaluate Confucius's views on virtue. [15]

This question invites an explanation and evaluation of the role of virtue within *The Analects*. Confucius sees virtue to be portrayed in the five behaviours of the gentleman (*junzi*). These are benevolence/humanness (*jen/ren*), righteousness (*yi*), ritual propriety (*li*), wisdom (*zhi*), and trustworthiness (*xin*). These are often synthesized into four: sincerity, benevolence, filial piety, and propriety. There can be two strands to this enactment of virtue: personal virtuous behaviour and in the context of politics—the ruler who governs in a virtuous way. Both strands involve the object of ordering society through filial piety and respect for one's elders. The best of rulers would be in possession of *de* (virtue) which could be seen as having high morals which would produce respect and obedience from the greater population, the 'little/petty people' without applying punitive control mechanisms 'He governs as a polestar with other lesser stars doing homage. (2.1) The maintenance of virtue producing modesty and propriety along with sincerity and benevolence. The ruler's virtue needs to match heaven to fulfil the Zhou theory of the mandate of heaven granted to all rulers. With the single person, the possession of virtue is seen in essence through filial piety recognizing that there is a constant need to meet family obligations, even beyond the grave through agreed rituals. It is seen as the root of all virtue (*de*).

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- Filial piety and its relationship to virtue; the realization of virtue with the ruler and the lesser (small) person
- The idea of fate dictating ways of life and perhaps resulting in a passive society
- Virtue as good manners
- Social order mechanisms and social hierarchies balanced with possible agents of change
- The 'Doctrine of the Mean' relating to the view in *The Analects*; contrasting the behaviour of the superior man (embodying virtue) and the mean man and the nature of wisdom (*zhi*)
- Self-realisation and habit forming through rituals and rites.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- The degree to which self-cultivation as a route for acquiring virtues thus eliminating analytical western thinking
- The 'doctrine of the mean' as a means producing social harmony - finding the middle ground between excesses of behaviour and attitude
- Aristotelian views on virtue and flourishing individuals rather than communities
- Utilitarianism as a western means of producing social harmony; the appropriateness of conformity and harmony in a market driven environment
- *Taoist* views and the view that Zhuangzi put forward that it is vital that qualities of virtue be taught and learnt as they have been lost
- Marxist views that societies progress through conflict rather than the qualities associated with virtue
- Virtue seen as to create 'weak' humans; Nietzschean perspectives of the human condition
- The reduction of virtue to mere manners and etiquette being outdated in the 21st century.

**René Descartes: *Meditations on First Philosophy***

7. (a) **Explain Descartes’s argument that clear and distinct mental perceptions can be trusted as reliable indicators of truth.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Descartes’s argument that clear and distinct mental perceptions can be trusted as reliable indicators of truth.** [15]

In Descartes’s third meditation, he posits, “I now seem to be able to lay it down as a general rule that whatever I perceive very clearly and distinctly is true.” The criterion for ascertaining the genuineness of a perception as being clear and distinct hinges on its invulnerability to doubt. Consequently, the Cartesian *cogito* emerges as the pivotal point in the quest to resolve the sceptical dilemma. According to Descartes, the role of the intellect is to apprehend the content of a judgment, while the function of the will lies in endorsing or refuting that content. In the case of a proposition that is both clear and distinct, such as “I think, therefore I am,” the will’s affirmation should remain unshaken, even when subjected to systematic doubt. Nonetheless, Descartes introduces a caveat: the possibility that one’s nature is subject to the influence of an immensely powerful God, capable of deceiving individuals, thus leading them to accept fallacious beliefs. Critics have pointed out that justifying the rule of clarity and distinctness on the basis of God’s existence entails a circular argument. To circumvent this circularity, Descartes in the fifth meditation introduces a distinction between presently clear and distinct perceptions and those merely recalled from memory. His strategy suggests that the possibility of a deceiving God arises only when individuals fail to perceive the infinity and perfection of God.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- Epistemic certainty and how Descartes sought to achieve it through clear and distinct perceptions
- Scepticism, the problem of radical doubt and the possibility of deception
- The *cogito* argument and its role in Descartes’s quest for certainty
- The relationship between the intellect and the will
- Descartes’s argument for the existence of a non-deceptive God and its significance in justifying the rule of clarity and distinctness
- Descartes’s distinction between presently clear and distinct perceptions and those merely remembered and how it affects the rule.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- The need for clear and distinct perceptions as foundational
- The tension between subjectivity in perception and the pursuit of objective truth in Descartes’s philosophy
- The circularity objection and whether Descartes successfully addressed it in his writings
- If the focus on clear and distinct perceptions was misguided and truth should be viewed as a useful, coherent, and contingent concept (Rorty)
- The compatibility of Descartes’s rule with epistemic fallibilism, the idea that all knowledge is uncertain to some degree
- That private mental languages are incoherent and that meaning is rooted in social practices and language games (Wittgenstein)
- The broader implications of Descartes’s rule for the field of epistemology and the search for certain knowledge
- Practical implications of adhering to the rule of clarity and distinctness in everyday decision-making.

8. (a) Explain the nature of Descartes’s separation between mind and body. [10]
- (b) Evaluate the nature of Descartes’s separation between mind and body. [15]

The problem of the separation of mind and body, as elucidated in Descartes’s philosophy, is in the realm of metaphysics and philosophy of mind. Descartes’s dualistic perspective, which posits the existence of two distinct substances—*res extensa* (the extended substance, i.e. the body) and *res cogitans* (the thinking substance, i.e. the mind)—gives rise to inquiries concerning their interaction, inherent nature, and ultimate unity. In the Second Meditation, Descartes establishes that while he can doubt the existence of material reality, he cannot doubt the existence of himself as a thinking entity. Subsequently, in the Sixth Meditation, having satisfied himself with a criterion of truth, he employs this criterion to formulate the positive argument: The essence of the mind is thought, and a thinking entity lacks extension, while the essence of matter is extension, and extended entities lack the capacity for thought. This raises the Mind-Body Interaction Problem. Descartes posited the pineal gland as the locus of interaction between the mind and body. However, this lacks a clearly defined mechanism: how can a non-physical mind exert causal influence over a physical body without contravening the principles of physics? Furthermore, Descartes’s dualism prompts inquiries into issues of personal identity and the unity of the self. This question holds implications for our comprehension of consciousness and the nature of selfhood.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

How Descartes’s method of systematic doubt, including the possibility of a deceptive demon, challenges our understanding of the relationship between the mind and the body

- Descartes’s use of clear and distinct perceptions as a criterion for distinguishing the mind (*res cogitans*) from the body (*res extensa*)
- The *cogito* argument (“I think, therefore I am”) and its implications for the mind-body problem
- The difficulties posed by the interaction between the non-extended mind and the extended body
- How a unified self can consist of both a thinking mind and an extended body while maintaining their distinctness.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- The role of perception in Descartes’s philosophy and how it contributes to the mind-body problem
- Compare Descartes’s substance dualism, which posits two fundamentally distinct substances—mental and physical, with a property dualist position
- Descartes’s reliance on clear and distinct perceptions as the foundation for distinguishing mind and body
- The mind-body interaction problem, including Descartes’s proposed solution through the pineal gland
- Descartes’s dualism and Baruch Spinoza’s monism and their differing approaches to the mind-body problem
- Contrast Descartes’s dualistic framework with the contemporary understanding of the mind-body problem, which emphasizes a holistic integration of mental and physical processes
- Contemporary discussions delve into the nature of *qualia* (subjective conscious experiences) and how they fit into a physicalist or dualist framework
- How Descartes’s dualism intersects with questions of free will and determinism, especially in light of his view of the mind as non-physical.

**Frantz Fanon: *Black Skin, White Masks***

9. (a) **Explain Fanon’s view that the man of colour being loved by a white woman is trying to become a white man.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Fanon’s view that the man of colour being loved by a white woman is trying to become a white man.** [15]

In Chapter 3, Fanon outlines his thesis that by being loved by the white woman, a man of colour becomes a white man. “Her love opens the illustrious path that leads to total fulfilment ...” Fanon links desire’s fulfilment with the white body of the woman to a conferring of ‘worthiness’ on the coloured man. Fanon uses the creation of the character Jean Veneuse by René Maran to investigate the significance for a black man of a relationship with a white woman. Veneuse is a solitary figure but hopes that his cultural intelligence will enable him to love freely, but sees he needs authorization by a white man. Fanon explores the relationship between the coloured man’s sense of his own race and past when entering a relationship with a white woman. He quotes Achille who talks about “deracialization” in choosing partners of a different race. Fanon explores possible neurosis theories, specifically autistic thinking, and the way the relationship illustrates Veneuse’s lack of self-esteem. Fanon speaks of the abandonment of Veneuse early in life resulting in not wanting to be loved and its effect on self-esteem which is potentially transformed through being loved by the white woman. But Veneuse is not like others because of the worthlessness his colour confers. There is no respite for the black man who accepts the ‘split’ imposed by Europeans—he has to “elevate himself to the white man’s level”. See also the treatment of sexual activity in Chapter 6.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- The “Long live Schoelcher!” anecdote and what its survival in memory testifies to
- The story of Jean Veneuse and his love of Andrée Marielle; Veneuse has to reject his Antillean history and link so that he can become not a negro but a “very, very dark” man and capable of being accepted as being with a white woman
- Veneuse sees the risk of appearing to reject the women of his own race and wonders if he is “unconsciously endeavouring to take (his) revenge on the European female for everything her ancestors have inflicted on (his) people ...”
- Achille’s address to the Interracial Conference of 1949
- The exploration of neurosis explanations and the use of a passage on autistic thinking
- Self-esteem as a problem for the coloured man pursuing a relationship with a white woman; how the interracial relationship will confirm hierarchies imposed by Europeans.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- Is Fanon too dependent on one account (Veneuse) to explore his view?
- Is Fanon’s assumption of difference conferred by race and history a barrier to a full understanding of the experience of interracial relationships?
- Is Fanon’s account of the issues of self-esteem in the coloured man convincing?
- Is Fanon’s use of neurosis as an explanation for the coloured man’s concept of himself convincing?
- The psychoanalytic tradition of Freud and his treatment of ‘neurosis’
- Is the story of Veneuse and his sense of abandonment a convincing account of how an interracial relationship could be understood?
- Is Fanon relying on unjustifiable accounts of the subconscious or anthropological history to maintain his position?

10. (a) **Explain the importance of language to Fanon’s account of the “black man’s dimension of being-for-others”.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate the importance of language to Fanon’s account of the “black man’s dimension of being-for-others”.** [15]

At the start of Chapter 1, Fanon states that “to speak is to exist absolutely for the other”. What Fanon then explores is how, for the Antillean black man, the use of language—and its reception by the European born in France—is a critical part of the inferiority felt by those under colonial rule. Fanon says, “to speak means being able to use certain syntax ... but it means above all assuming a culture and bearing the weight of civilization”. Fanon assumes that all colonized people have an inferiority complex that has taken root. He says that they “position themselves in relation to the civilizing language”—this he terms the ‘metropolitan culture’. The use of/proficiency in the colonizing language acts like a barometer of how assimilated the Antillean is in the ‘motherland’ and also how many barriers get erected with the population of the Antillean origin of birth. Fanon describes how the returning Antillean is marked by the use of language and how it affects the Antillean who travels to France and returns—and the reception of this language by white French and Antillean natives.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- Fanon believes colonized people’s “local cultural originality has been committed to the grave”
- The returning Antillean has their view of their island infected by their experience of living with the colonizer and this is expressed most clearly and directly in their speech and language
- The returnee asserts himself by answering only in French and not understanding Creole anymore; this gives the returnee “a critical attitude toward his fellow islanders”—the language shift illustrates the split from the original community
- Westermann’s observation that the educated black man is trying to overcome his inferiority: “... adorning the naïve language with European expressions; using bombastic phrases ... all these contribute to a feeling of equality with the European ...”
- The relationship between the Antillean and African fellow black people, differences between which could be reinforced by use of language
- The comparison between the use of Creole in Martinique and Breton in Brittany; the white man condescends with language and “is an attempt to reach down to them” saying in effect, “you stay where you are”—using pidgin imprisons the black man and Fanon uses an analogy with medical infection.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- Is Fanon fair in assuming the use of French by the Antillean is to seek to transform existence from that of the black to the white man?
- Is there any universalism to be found between white and black people in the use of a shared language, despite the history of that language’s use?
- Is Fanon’s view that “to speak a language is to appropriate its world”, and that language becomes a cultural tool convincing?
- Does Fanon assume too much in seeing any use of language as inseparable from the inferiority/superiority dynamic of the colonized/colonizer?
- Is the surprise of the white person encountering a fluent French speaking Antillean a fair observation?
- Has Fanon pathologized language use with assumptions about the essence of those who have been colonized?

**John Stuart Mill: *On Liberty***

11. (a) **Explain Mill’s view that if any person acts only according to custom, that person will gain no experience in determining what is best.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Mill’s view that if any person acts only according to custom, that person will gain no experience in determining what is best.** [15]

This question asks for an explanation and evaluation of Mill’s treatment of the negative and positive aspects of custom both in personal and societal contexts. Mill’s views are particularly evident in Chapter III. However, the influence of custom emerges as a concern as early as Chapter I in his exploration of the relationship between liberty and authority, the power of the ‘tyranny of the majority’ and the application of ‘the harm principle’ as well as in Chapter II in his assessment of the freedoms of thought, expression, and action as requirements in the estimation of the worth of opinions. Mill highlights the primacy of individuality drawing attention to situations in which traditions and customs could prevail that threaten that individuality along with the happiness of society. Whatever stands in the way of individuality and liberty is assessed by Mill as a form of despotism and ‘the despotism of custom’ as a threat to human development and societal progress is the best example. Mill argues that an intelligent, rational acceptance of the accumulated wisdom of human experience can result in customs that not only do not threaten individuality but serve to strengthen it. An intelligent acceptance of custom just like the intelligent avoidance of custom is better than the blind and uncritical adherence to it. However, Mill argues that prevailing customs might be of three types: too narrow or misinterpreted; interpreted correctly but unsuitable; good and suitable but not conducive to instilling those qualities distinctive of the character of a well-developed person. Mill also highlights the important role a well-developed individual, or ‘genius’, can play as a model for striking the correct balance between custom and individuality.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- The primacy of individuality and liberty
- Custom as a threat to the development of mental and moral faculties; the ‘genius’ as the model for the development of these faculties
- Custom and customary behaviour *versus* spontaneity, creativity, and originality; custom and the pressure to conform; the ‘tyranny of the majority’. Custom and harmful behaviour: the ‘harm principle’, self and other-regarding actions
- The intelligent conformity to custom *versus* a blind acceptance of custom
- Custom and customary behaviour impedes the spirit of liberty progress and personal and social development; Custom as a threat to variety in modes of living and thinking
- The principle of utility in ‘discerning and desiring what is the best’.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- Custom and customary behaviour as inevitable threats to individuality, liberty, and freedom of choice, e.g. the views of Alexis de Tocqueville and Jacob Burckhardt
- Customs possess social value and provide opportunities for order, social organization, cooperation, and legitimate exercise of freedom, e.g. Plato’s view of the just state, Friedrich Hayek’s view of a free society
- Custom impedes the creation of new ways of living in which tolerance of differences of opinion prevails, e.g. Alexander von Humboldt’s view of a progressive society
- Is the influence of custom the only factor inhibiting the development of mental and moral faculties required for discerning what is best, e.g. environment, education, genetic makeup, socio-economic position
- Contemporary examples of the ‘despotism of custom’, e.g. Big Data culture, Artificial Intelligence, social media platforms, selective exposure to opinions in virtual ‘echo chambers’
- Intelligent choice preceded by analysis and evaluation promotes the development of moral character
- Custom and habit as possible sources of moral character, e.g. Aristotle’s view of custom and habit as two factors accounting for moral excellence.

12. (a) **Explain Mill’s estimation of the evils that result from silencing the discussion of opinions.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Mill’s estimation of the evils that result from silencing the discussion of opinions.** [15]

This question asks about arguments developed most precisely in Chapter II, regarding the evils that might emerge from the silencing of opinions. As the question is set against the backdrop of Mill’s views on the liberty of thought and discussion, responses might refer to ‘the tyranny of the majority’, the ‘harm principle’ and the despotism of custom’ (Chapter I) and the notion of ‘dead dogma’ (Chapter II) while exploring the evils associated with silencing opinions. Mill generally feels that all attempts to silence discussion of opinions unjustifiably assumes infallibility. He says that an opinion could be true; partly true and partly false; or be false. He concludes that silencing discussion of an opinion which is true eliminates the possibility of replacing erroneous opinions with the truth. If the opinion is false, the absence of discussion will eliminate a clearer impression of truth. No matter whether an opinion is true, false, or somewhere between, we must keep an open mind and act upon the information we have at our disposal in order to render opinions true. Truth must be constantly subjected to discussion and debate in order to render beliefs as living, not dead dogmas. Silencing of discussion will inhibit creativity and originality both in terms of thought and styles of living. It might also promote social and legal discrimination amongst parties in disagreement regarding issues of import. Silencing discussion limits the development of moral courage and the progressive development of sound moral character.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- Liberty of thought and discussion require that even the opinion of a single individual must not be silenced except in instances where that opinion might bring about harm to others
- Open discussion of opinions facilitates the exchange of error for truth and subjects truth to critical evaluation; silencing of opinions, whether true or false, assumes infallibility
- Personal and social progress and development come about through the elimination of error by means of experimentation, interpretation, discussion, and debate
- The absence of discussion of true ideas can turn them into dead, empty and meaningless dogmas; the ‘tyranny of the majority’ and ‘the despotism of custom’ as factors promoting the silencing of discussion of opinions
- To take our own opinions seriously and develop the skills by means of which we justify our opinions we need to be able to engage with people who seriously object to our opinions
- Freedom of speech and discussion allow people to arrive at a true vision of themselves and of the world in which they live; the suppression of speech and discussion impedes the achievement of these objectives.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- Is truth the only thing that is valuable? What about the value of individual welfare, self-sacrifice, well-being, and tolerance of opinions diametrically opposed to our own?
- How realistic is Mill’s calculus of changing error for truth?
- Whether true or false, are some opinions, by the very nature of their content, not open to discussion or debate? What criteria could be used to identify such opinions?
- Is the silencing of discussion of the truth value of an opinion ever justifiable? If pursuit of truth is one of Mill’s fundamental utilitarian principles does the suppression of that pursuit diminish the maximization of happiness in society?
- The suppression of discussion by governmental force *versus* the suppression of discussion by the pressure for social conformity, e.g. Willmoore Kendall’s view that there can be no legal or social limitations on the communication process amongst individuals
- Is censorship ever a wise policy, especially regarding religious, moral or knowledge claims?
- Infallibility regarding an opinion *versus* certainty regarding an opinion
- Contemporary challenges to the silencing of discussion of opinions, e.g. Richard Sorabji’s view that media firms give the impression of discussion by offering targeted audiences skewed information; Adam Moore’s view that social media platforms disguise the exchange of emotional responses and reactions as the exchange of ideas; Robert Post’s view that Anonymity in social media platforms dismantles the authentic encounter with actual persons.

**Friedrich Nietzsche: *The Genealogy of Morals***

13. (a) Explain Nietzsche’s idea of “comedians of the ideal” in relation to the “ascetic ideal”. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Nietzsche’s idea of “comedians of the ideal” in relation to the “ascetic ideal”. [15]

Nietzsche delves into the idea of asceticism, a term used to describe a way of life characterized by self-discipline, self-denial, and the renunciation of pleasures. He is particularly interested in the ascetic ideals of Christianity and how they have shaped Western culture and morality. Asceticism is viewed as a psychological and cultural response to suffering and the frailty of human condition. The author distinguishes between noble or aristocratic values and priestly or ascetic values. He argues that the ascetic ideals have been propagated by the priestly class to gain power and control over the masses. Active asceticism involves the intentional pursuit of self-discipline and self-control. Reactive asceticism, on the other hand, arises as a reaction to external suffering and seeks to find meaning and consolation in suffering. The ascetic ideals are linked to the ‘will to truth’ and the ‘will to power’. The will to truth reflects a desire to seek objective, transcendent truths, while the will to power is the fundamental drive for dominance, control, and affirmation of life. Some students might propose that Nietzsche’s critique overlooks the potential benefits of ascetic practices. And they might also contend that his analysis is culturally biased, primarily focusing on Western Christianity. Other philosophical traditions, such as certain Eastern philosophies or indigenous belief systems, might interpret asceticism differently and not necessarily as a tool for power dynamics.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- The historical and cultural origins of ascetic ideals, particularly in the context of Christianity
- The psychological impact of asceticism, and how it can lead to feelings of guilt, self-hatred, and denial of life’s pleasures
- The role of the priestly class in promoting asceticism for its own benefit, including the consolidation of power and authority
- The concept of the ‘will to power’ as a driving force behind asceticism and how it invites discussion on the underlying motivations and psychological dynamics of self-denial
- The concept of the ‘will to truth’ as a driving force behind asceticism and how it invites discussion on the underlying motivations and psychological dynamics of self-denial
- The concept of genealogy and its key role in the critical understanding of ethics.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- The possibility of alternative values that affirm life and embrace instinctual drives, challenging the prevailing ascetic ideals
- The role that self-denial plays into the development of a mature and socially integrated individual
- The idea of self-denial and its impact on the human psyche. Is there a balance between self-discipline and self-indulgence that leads to psychological health?
- How economics and societal expectations can play the role of the priestly class in non-religious societies, in order to impose a given set of values
- Is the ‘will to power’ a fundamental human drive? If so, has it any limits?
- Are there any other life-affirming values that might be brought into play, e.g. empathy, solidarity, commonality?
- The view that Nietzsche’s analysis is culturally biased, primarily focusing on Western Christianity
- The view Nietzsche’s analysis overlooks the gendered aspects of asceticism. Ascetic ideals, historically promoted by male-dominated religious institutions, have different implications for men and women
- Students might incorporate some alternative points of views, as appears in the works of Elisabeth Schüssler, Sigmund Freud and/or Monique Wittig, among others.

14. (a) Explain Nietzsche’s relationship between the will to power and master morality. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Nietzsche’s relationship between the will to power and master morality. [15]

*On the Genealogy of Morals* explores the origins and development of moral values and concepts within society and across time. He employs a genealogical method to trace the development of moral concepts. Instead of accepting moral values at face value, he investigates their origins and the historical processes that led to their emergence. Nietzsche distinguishes between master and slave morality. And argues that slave morality is born out of resentment and as a reaction to the dominance of master morality. The concept of the “will to power” is central to his philosophy. He argues that all living beings have a fundamental drive to assert themselves and achieve their potential, it is “the strongest, most life-affirming drive” and a “basic instinct”. This concept plays a significant role in his critique of morality and his vision of a new, more life-affirming ethic transcending traditional values and creating a new moral outlook. Students might mention the “overman” found in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, who represents an individual who has the strength and creativity to overcome societal constraints and creates their own moral values, leading to master rather than slave morality.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- The question of the conflict of values, represented in the different ideas about of good and evil that might exist in a society
- How Judeo-Christian morality has become the benchmark for Western pervading understanding of ethics
- The concept of resentment as a driving force for morality and its implications both for the individual and the society
- The conflict between the values of life, e.g. strength, power, will and the values of resentment, piety, and hope in the afterlife
- The relation between life in its bare conditions and the narratives that assign value and sense to it
- The role of revenge and the problems of retributive justice in relation to the action of men.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- How the religious beliefs and philosophical ideologies have influenced the conflict of values and moral systems throughout history. Students might argue that Nietzsche’s emphasis on individual creativity and the will to power neglects the possibility of universally applicable moral standards
- Is there no possible understanding between an ethic originated from a religious background and an ethic created by an autonomous individual?
- Master morality, the will to power and the possibility of social engagement and participation
- Explore the concept of divine judgment and its significance in various religious and cultural traditions, and how it is related to ethics
- How and to what extent the study of etymology and philology can contribute to understanding the evolution of moral concepts and values
- The problem of the rank order of values in a given society, and how could it be resolved.
- Are there any absolute values apart from the ones that Nietzsche mentions? Students may argue that other factors, such as empathy or social cooperation, could also play a role in shaping moral concepts
- How different value systems have shaped different societies and how the same historical events could be interpreted in different ways depending on different given value systems. Students might challenge the historical accuracy of Nietzsche’s genealogical method
- From an alternative and critical point of view students might draw from the works of Thomas Nagel, Karl Marx, Jonathan Haidt and/or Immanuel Kant, among others.

**Martha C. Nussbaum: *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach***

15. (a) **Explain Nussbaum’s Capabilities Approach as an approach to basic social justice.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Nussbaum’s Capabilities Approach as an approach to basic social justice.** [15]

The question stems from Chapter 2 and invites an exploration of the central argument in Nussbaum’s text. Students might explore the reasons why Nussbaum prefers “Capabilities Approach” instead of “Human Development Approach” and refer to Nussbaum’s opening of the approach to the capabilities of nonhuman animals. Students might focus on the argument that sets the Capabilities Approach as an approach of basic social justice: the question that Nussbaum finds to be central is “What is each person able to do and to be?” Students might highlight the role that choice and freedom play in this approach and as key elements when comparing and assessing societies for their basic decency or justice. Students might explore the role of values and their link to pluralism. Moreover, students might mention the main capability failures, such as social injustice and inequality, and how they are connected to discrimination and marginalization. Students might explore the role that government and public policy play in enacting the approach. Finally, students might consider possible weaknesses of Nussbaum’s views, in terms of the paradox of inquiry, or the difficulty in demanding specific policies within the impossibility to define specific values. Students might consider other philosophical views on social justice, e.g. Plato, Rousseau, Rawls, Nozick.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- The Capabilities Approach and other possible names
- The role of nonhuman animals in the approach
- The nature of value and pluralism
- The role of choice and freedom
- The difference between internal and combined capabilities (internal equipment, basic capabilities)
- The role of government and public policy; political liberalism.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- Whether the Capabilities Approach can be extended to nonhuman animals: other views on animal rights, e.g. Singer
- The risks of self-definition in a mass society, e.g. Ortega y Gasset’s revolt of the masses, Taylor’s view on the slide to subjectivism
- The issue of defining values in their content and ethical views on this topic, e.g. Plato, Kant, Mill, Bentham, Scheler
- Sen’s concept of “substantial freedoms”
- Views on equality and liberty, e.g. Mill, Constant, Berlin, Bobbio
- The role of political liberalism compared to other political views, e.g. paternalism, communitarianism
- The concept of human dignity, e.g. Kant
- Other views on social justice, e.g. Plato, Rousseau, Rawls, Nozick.

16. (a) **Explain Nussbaum’s claim that development economics has wide-ranging influence on our world.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Nussbaum’s claim that development economics has wide-ranging influence on our world.** [15]

The question stems from Chapter 3 and invites an exploration of Nussbaum’s views on development economics. Students might illustrate why Nussbaum refers to it and what specific approaches she analyzes. Responses might focus on the GDP Approach, show the reasons why it is an attractive model, and its flaws. Mainly, students might highlight the fact that increased economic growth does not necessarily improve quality of life. Moreover, GDP, being based on national average, does not look at actual distribution, resulting in economic growth based on great social inequalities. Students might consider another approach based on total or average utility, which is the Utilitarian Approach. Students might consider Nussbaum’s reference to Bentham and the main flaws of Utilitarianism, which are similar to Nussbaum’s criticism of the GDP Approach. Students might explore the concepts of preference, choice, satisfaction, and refer to Sen’s view on “adaptive preferences”: since preferences respond to social conditions, individuals’ satisfaction is an adaptation to needs and expectations external to the individuals themselves. Students might mention Vasanti’s story from Chapter 1, or refer to Nozick’s “experience machine”, where the focus is on the necessity to choose, rather than on satisfaction. Students might evaluate Nussbaum’s claim that Utilitarianism undervalues freedom or consider other views on freedom, pleasure, happiness, e.g. Plato, Hume, Rousseau, Kant.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- Development economics and its main approaches: GDP, Utilitarianism
- Strengths and weaknesses of the GDP Approach
- Strengths and weaknesses of the Utilitarian Approach
- The concept of preference, choice, satisfaction
- The role of freedom
- Vasanti’s story.

Part A: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- Whether Nussbaum’s criticism of the GDP Approach has flaws
- Whether Nussbaum’s criticism of the Utilitarian Approach has flaws
- The concept of preference in the different Utilitarian theories
- Sen’s view on the adaptive preferences; other views on created needs, e.g. materialism, Critical Theory, the School of Frankfurt, Ortega y Gasset
- Nozick’s “experience machine” and the importance of choice
- Other views on freedom, e.g. Mill, Constant, Berlin, Bobbio
- Other views of pleasure, happiness, e.g. Plato, Hume, Rousseau, Kant.

**José Ortega y Gasset: *The Revolt of the Masses***

17. (a) **Explain Ortega y Gasset’s claim that the rebellion of the masses may lead to an unexampled organization of humanity, but it may also be a catastrophe of human destiny.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Ortega y Gasset’s claim that the rebellion of the masses may lead to an unexampled organization of humanity, but it may also be a catastrophe of human destiny.** [15]

This question refers to a claim found in Chapter 9 of *The Revolt of the Masses*. Ortega y Gasset suggests that European society is in a moment of crisis and lacks stability. The author mentions that man’s life is now made up of the same “vital repertory which before characterized only the superior minorities”. This enables the mass man to feel powerful and full of plenitude, as this unknown and new social structure must shift and act accordingly to avoid a catastrophe such as the unlimited power of the state or man. The author explains that the nowadays dominating man is a primitive one, rising in the middle of a civilized world; this means that although there is a great advance in technical knowledge, man has not yet introspected the fact that the mentioned knowledge is artificial and a product of civilization. This lack of reflection makes man lack purpose and therefore enthusiasm which makes things possible.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- The mass man dominates while he lacks purpose and goes drifting along
- The mass man who dominates public life, political and non-political
- The “average man” ruling
- Defining why this might be a catastrophe of human destiny
- The technical knowledge in the modern culture and the “man of science.”

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- The mass man is not qualified to rule
- The mass man as anarchist and democratic at the same time
- The masses focused on their own well-being and wanting to rule simultaneously
- The lack of purpose of the masses as a milestone for social chaos
- The role of the state in this new transformation
- To what extent is this dangerous and catastrophic?
- The problem of excessive power
- Reference to alternative views such as Plato, Marx, Habermas, etc.

18. (a) Explain Ortega y Gasset’s concept of a “self-satisfied man”. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Ortega y Gasset’s concept of a “self-satisfied man”. [15]

This question refers to a concept mentioned throughout *The Revolt of the Masses*. The self-satisfied man emerges when the man now perceives himself as limitless. This self-satisfied man feels “(...) perfections and completeness (...) will be richer, ampler and more perfect as if it enjoyed a spontaneous, inexhaustible power of increase”. This is perceived as a problem to Ortega y Gasset as this man lacks self-critique and purpose. The self-satisfied man identifies himself as part of the state but doesn’t seem ready to rule. The self-satisfied man is only concerned with their own well-being and demands these benefits but at the same time acts as the author of law and order. This contradiction concerns Ortega y Gasset and opens the discussion towards the role of the State in the presence of this new social character.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- The mass-man like a “spoilt child”
- The concept of the power within the self-satisfied man
- The concept of the “average man”
- The lack of purpose in the self-satisfied man
- The lack of humbleness in the self-satisfied man
- The mass man claiming his natural rights.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- To what extent is the self-satisfied man able to satisfy himself?
- Can the mass man rule without a purpose?
- To what extent does being “like everyone else” allow oneself to be self-satisfied?
- The problems of being a “spoilt child”
- The lack of obligations and excess of freedom
- To what extent is it possible to rule (oneself and others) without a purpose and a horizon?
- The problem of lacking humility
- Reference to alternative views such as Nietzsche, Hobbes, Rand, etc.

**Plato: *The Republic*, Books IV–IX**

19. (a) **Explain Plato’s claim that tyranny naturally arises out of democracy, timocracy, oligarchy, and aristocracy.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Plato’s claim that tyranny naturally arises out of democracy, timocracy, oligarchy, and aristocracy.** [15]

In book VIII, Plato discusses governance of the state. His ideal state is governed by the philosopher King and is an aristocracy. Plato thinks that this can decay over several steps. First, an aristocracy decays into a timocracy, which is rule by the military classes; this ‘is intermediate between aristocracy and oligarchy’. Plato continues that ‘the next form of government is oligarchy, in which the rule is of the rich only’. This is followed by democracy. Here, ‘democracy comes into power when the poor are the victors’. Finally, democracy will descend into tyranny ‘which is the disease or death of all government’. In each case, flaws in different types of government naturally lead to their replacement by a worse form of government. Students may also discuss Plato’s ideal state led by a philosopher King, where all aspects are perfectly balanced and just. They might turn to political theory to evaluate Plato’s claims, or to the modern world; particularly when it comes to Plato’s claims about the ranking of democracy.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- Descriptions of aristocracy, timocracy, oligarchy, democracy, and tyranny according to Plato
- The process of change from one form of government to the next
- Justice and balance in the ideal state
- Plato’s views about the tripartite soul and parallels in the just state
- The philosopher King
- Plato’s ideas about gold, silver, and gold citizens.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- The nature of aristocracy e.g. Hobbes, Machiavelli
- Tyranny as opposed to aristocracy: differences and similarities
- Different governments in the world today e.g. democratic nations, military governments, tyrannies, and aristocracies
- Direct democracy as opposed to representative democracy
- Contrasting views to Plato’s about rule by the majority e.g. Mill, Rousseau, Marx
- The idea that history follows a linear pattern from aristocracy to tyranny e.g. Hegelian dialectic
- Plato’s ideal state and justice in relation to other ideas about justice in the state e.g. Rawls.

20. (a) **Explain Plato’s claim that the prisoners in the Cave Analogy only see their own shadows, or the shadows of one another.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Plato’s claim that the prisoners in the Cave Analogy only see their own shadows, or the shadows of one another.** [15]

In book VII, Plato introduces his Cave Analogy. Here, prisoners are tied up in a cave and can only see the shadows of passing people and objects. They come to think that these shadows are what is ‘actually before them’ and ‘the truth would be literally nothing but the shadows of the images’. In contrast, the prisoner who escapes and leaves the cave becomes acquainted with the true nature of the world. On returning, he is shunned by his fellow prisoners who do not want to accept that there is anything beyond the shadows in the cave. The Analogy of the Cave introduces Plato’s epistemological views and his world of forms. According to Plato, what we perceive is an imperfect reflection of the true nature of the world. It is only through a careful and long dialectic process that we can grasp the nature of reality, and the world of forms. This contrasts with Aristotle’s more empiricist views that the true nature of things resides within them. It also contrasts with later empiricism such as that of Hobbes and Hume, or the logical positivists.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- Plato’s Analogy of the Cave
- The shadows as flawed reflections of reality
- Plato’s world of forms; the form of the good and the analogy of the sun
- Plato’s dialectic and methods of accessing truth
- Epistemological groundings of the Cave Analogy
- Other themes in the Cave Analogy e.g. political and moral claims.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- Whether we have access to reality e.g. Moore and scepticism, brain in a vat scenarios
- Sources of knowledge i.e. rationalism and empiricism
- Aristotle and the view that the true nature of reality is within the visible world
- Empiricism where knowledge comes from experience e.g. Hume
- Critiques of Plato’s world of forms
- Whether the Cave Analogy tells us about ourselves or whether it is too removed to serve as a good analogy.

**Charles Taylor: *The Ethics of Authenticity***

21. (a) Explain Taylor’s view on how our identity is formed. [10]

(b) Evaluate Taylor’s view on how our identity is formed. [15]

The question refers to what Taylor explains in Book IV and V about how our identity is constructed and formed. Taylor identifies two central concepts; First, we are in constant dialogue with others and need the other to understand who we are as “defining myself means finding what is significant in my differences from others.” So, this first element of our identity is a construction with the other. Second, we need the recognition of others to construct our identity as “we define this as always in dialogue with, sometimes in struggle against, the identities our significant others want to recognize in us.” In the interaction with other’s identity, we differentiate ourselves. Taylor discusses that the contemporary culture of authenticity leaves relationships as secondary, just centering on the self and distancing from what our relation to others might involve in the construction of our identity.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- The ideal of authenticity in relation to the concept of identity Taylor presents
- The construction of identity as a dialogue with others and a constant need for recognition
- The contradiction between what identity seems to be in the contemporary culture, and identity as centred in the self as opposed to the concept of recognition and dialogue
- Relationships as a way to fulfil and shape us but not to define or limit ourselves.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- To what extent is it possible not to be fully defined and limited by others?
- The struggle between living in a community and constructing my Self in individuality
- The impact of modern malaises in the construction of identity; the loss of meaning, instrumental reasoning, and the loss of freedom
- The role of politics in the construction of identity
- Originality *versus* conformity
- To what extent do I need the other to be authentic?
- Is the need for recognition and dialogue to construct my identity an egoistic and instrumental approach towards my “significant others”?
- Other views on identity such as Parfit, Ricoeur, Locke, etc.

22. (a) **Explain Taylor’s claim that the relativism widely held today is a profound mistake, even in some respects self-limiting.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Taylor’s claim that the relativism widely held today is a profound mistake, even in some respects self-limiting.** [15]

The question refers to Taylor’s claim in Chapter 2, where the author explains that there is an acceptance of the phrase “everybody has his or her own values”, but as Bloom says, this is held as a moral position. Relativism seems to mean that “everyone has the right to develop their own form of life, grounded on their own sense of what is really important or of value.” This is often viewed as a call of individualism, of self-fulfillment. Taylor stands against this and claims it is a mistake because this philosophy of life makes people forget about what transcends them and ends up being self-indulging and selfish. Taylor believes that this way of authenticity becomes a moral ideal of something that we ought to be or desire which is just a “moral force” behind notions of self-indulgence. The relativism widely espoused today ends up being a commandment of how we ought to be authentic or true to ourselves, and freedom is no longer a core value in authenticity.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- Relativist culture as self-indulging
- The culture of narcissism
- Models of conformity amongst people who claim to be themselves
- Relativism as a way of individualism
- The concept of moral ideal and moral subjectivism
- The liberalism of neutrality.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- To what extent is the relativist view a screen for self-indulgence? The debate between relativism and absolutism
- The idea of authenticity and what it requires
- The validity of Taylor’s claim that relativism becomes a moral force
- The role of industrialization and technology in the relativist culture
- The validity of Taylor’s claim that authenticity should be taken seriously as a moral ideal grounded in reason
- The moral force that relativism seems to be and the clash with freedom
- To what extent has the culture of self-fulfillment led people to lose sight of what transcends them?
- Other perspectives on moral relativism and authenticity e.g. Nietzsche, Heidegger, Camus, etc.

**Lao Tzu: *Tao Te Ching***

**23. (a) Explain Lao Tzu’s notion of virtue (*te*). [10]**

**(b) Evaluate Lao Tzu’s notion of virtue (*te*). [15]**

This question asks for an explanation and evaluation of the notion of virtue (*te*), one of the central notions of the *Tao Te Ching*. While the notion of virtue pervades the entire text, Lao Tzu most prominently focuses upon it in sections 10, 12, 16, 19, 23, 28, 33, 38, 54, and 55 of the text. Virtue is not understood as a character trait of moral righteousness in a traditional Western sense, e.g. utilitarian or deontological views of virtue. Rather, it is living a life in complete alignment and harmony with the *Tao*. Alignment and harmony with the *Tao* entails following the path of *wu wei* (non-action) a path in perfect accordance with a universally normative standard which permeates the natural order of all animate and inanimate things that exist. Virtue makes no claims to achievements of any sort. A virtuous life is a life of humility, moderation, and spontaneity free from distracting and fruitless efforts which would only lead one away from the *Tao* and from virtue. In this way, Lao Tzu sees virtue as the manifestation of the *Tao* in all existing things. In other words, those who fully embrace virtue in an effortless manner affect the universe by bringing it into line with the *Tao*. This mode of living allows one’s inner nature to blossom forth and display the character, personality, and behaviour of the sage (*sheng jen/ren*). The cultivation of *te* (virtue) in the self, family, town, and country makes them all part of the inner life of the individual.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- Virtue (*te*) as related to the *Tao*, the beginning of heaven and earth and the principle of the existence of all animate and inanimate things
- Virtue (*te*) as the manifestation of the *Tao* in all things that exist; virtue (*te*) does not stand against the *Tao* and embraces the inevitable
- Virtue (*te*) as modesty, abandonment of all possessives, egoistic thoughts, and ways of living
- Praise, honour, glory, fame are not in harmony with virtue (*te*) nor are they in alignment with the *Tao*
- Virtue (*te*) means abiding in emptiness, stillness with an awareness of the eternal which leads to authentic self-realization, knowledge of the self in humility and the avoidance of error; virtue (*te*) is like becoming an infant in simple harmony with its surroundings; virtue related to the notion of the uncarved block (*pu*)
- The highest virtue (*te*) follows the path of *wu wei* (non-action) and avoids the empty formalities of etiquette and ritual as well as the duty-based notions of justice and benevolence.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- Is Lao Tzu’s notion of virtue too passive to provide guidance on how to perform virtuous actions, e.g. being a virtuous person and acting as a virtuous person acts?
- If virtue entails following the path of *wu wei* (non-action) is it even possible to act in a virtuous manner? Is Lao Tzu clear on how virtue leads to authenticity where one’s inner self effortlessly blossoms forth?
- Relationships of Lao Tzu’s notion of virtue to more western philosophical notions of virtue, e.g. teleological views (Bentham, Mill, Singer, Fletcher), deontological views (Kant, Ross)
- Possible parallels of Lao Tzu’s notion of virtue to the views of Virtue Ethics, e.g. Aristotle, Hursthouse, Anscombe?
- Relationships between Lao Tzu’s notion of virtue and the views of, for example, Confucius, Zhuangzi, or Mencius
- Relationships between Lao Tzu’s notion of virtue and the character of the ruler as one who treats the ruled as one’s own body in harmony with the *Tao*
- Do praise, glory, achievement, fame, and honour always stand in the way of virtue? How might they actually assist in living a virtuous life?
- Possibilities of living a life of simplicity, purity, and selflessness where one abandons knowledge, duty, profit, ambition, and achievement, e.g. monastic, contemplative, and ascetic lifestyles in, for example, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity.

24. (a) Explain Lao Tzu's view that moderation (*jian*) is the avoidance of excesses and extremes. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Lao Tzu's view that moderation (*jian*) is the avoidance of excesses and extremes. [15]

This question asks for an explanation and evaluation of Lao Tzu's understanding of the notion of *jian* (moderation), a key notion of the *Tao Te Ching*. What Lao Tzu means by moderation is best found in sections 8, 9, 24, 29, 42, 44, 45, 46, 50, 53, 55, 59, 67, 77 and 81 of the text. It is important to note that the notion of *jian* (moderation) is closely linked to other central themes of the text, for example the *Tao* (way), *te* (virtue), the *pu* (the uncarved block), and *wu wei* (non-action). Moderation is not presented as an active pursuit motivated by duty or principle as is the case in some Western philosophical traditions (e.g. Plato, Aristotle, utilitarianism, virtue ethics, situation ethics). Lao Tzu sees moderation as avoiding conflict, extremes, desires and living in harmony with the spontaneous unfolding of the universe. Hence, moderation is most precisely understood as self-restraint. There is no hoarding, no arrogance, no desire for achievements or glory. Moderation will bring about balance with the cosmic order as well as with the self, family, society, and the state. Moderation also means freedom from the enslavement to one's own ideas and from impulsive, obsessive, and contrived behaviour which ultimately interferes with the natural operation of the *Tao* and with living in a virtuous manner. Moderation has no preconceived objectives and is characterized by disinterestedness which brings peace and quiet to the individual and to the universe.

Part A: While explaining, students may refer to:

- The notion of moderation as the avoidance of conflict, excesses, extremes; moderation as avoidance of achievements, praise, boasting, impulsive behaviour
- The absence of moderation as the lack of harmony with the *Tao*, the principle of the unified order and existence of all things in the universe, and an imbalance with *te* (virtue) characteristic of a life of modesty and simplicity
- Moderation as the best approach to good government as moderation entails tolerance, peace and quiet
- The relationship of moderation to the notion of the uncarved block (*Pu*), the simple and natural state of being uncluttered with extreme and excessive desires
- Moderation shows one where to halt and practice self-constraint; the goal of moderation is to have enough without excess; moderation follows the path of *wu wei* which reduces obsessive behaviour and allows spontaneity to enrich life naturally
- Moderation as related to compassion, generosity, and humility; one who lives a life of moderation does not overestimate life.

Part B: While evaluating, students may refer to:

- Moderation as both a personal and a political virtue; moderation and diplomacy, e.g. Moderation Theory and the quest for non-confrontational strategies which focus on compromise—Mary Astell, Philip Pettit, and the choice of the 'good-enough' over the best
- How realistic is Lao Tzu's understanding of moderation as a situation of no conflict in a contemporary world characterized by conflict?
- Relationships of Lao Tzu's notion of moderation with other philosophers and philosophical traditions, e.g. Epicurus and Epicureanism, Zeno of Citium and Stoicism, Locke, and tolerance of differing beliefs, Kant, and the duty to develop virtue in one's life,
- Relationship of Lao Tzu's notion of moderation and contemporary conflict resolution theory, e.g. Kenneth Thomas and Ralph Kilmann and the balance between assertiveness and empathy
- Relationship of Lao Tzu's notion of moderation as self-constraint with asceticism and ascetic traditions, e.g. Schopenhauer and the elimination of the will to live, Jainism and the elimination of all passions and desires, Waki ibn al Jarrah and Islamic asceticism's directive to let go of things associated with earthly life and its distractions
- Is it ever possible to be free from one's own thoughts and desires, e.g. the Taoist notion of *ziran*—allowing the universe to unfold on its own accord and not based on one's own desires

- Have the virtues of compassion, generosity, moderation, and humility lost their meaning in today's world?
  - Moderation and the balancing of opposites; *Yin* and *Yang* as the indicators of light and darkness, positive and negative energy. Moderation brings about the harmony and perfect balance of these two forces.
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