

PHILOSOPHY TRIPOS Part IA

Friday 29 May 2015

13.30 – 16.30

Paper 5

GENERAL

Write a philosophical essay on one of the following questions. Your essay must not overlap substantially with the content of any other essay that you have submitted as part of this examination.

Write the number of the question on the cover sheet.

STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS

20 Page Answer Book x 1

Rough Work Pad

You may not start to read the questions printed on the subsequent pages of this question paper until instructed that you may do so by the Invigilator

1. Should philosophers search for definitions?
2. Should all philosophical enquiry start with the demolition of pre-existing opinions? What can be achieved by such demolition?
3. A British newspaper has published cartoons mocking Mother Teresa and the pope, which are perceived as offensive by Catholics in Britain and elsewhere. The editor defends her decision to publish the cartoons on grounds of the right to free speech. Should we be persuaded by this defence?
4. 'In morals, as in science, we should aim for a reflective equilibrium between our immediate judgments and our deeper theoretical commitments.' Assess the plausibility of this claim with reference to at least one normative ethical theory.
5. Is the claim that we get ethical knowledge by ethical intuition any more mysterious than the claim that we get sensory knowledge by sense perception?
6. Do facts about human psychology have any implications for normative ethics?
7. Is morality conventional because the meaning of moral terms is a matter of convention?
8. 'Consider the claim that murder is wrong and $3 > 2$ because God freely determined that murder is wrong and $3 > 2$. Some people object that we can't imagine how God could possibly have made murder right or $3 < 2$. That's not a weighty objection because it would have been easy for God to have created us as unable to wrap our minds around these possibilities.' Evaluate this response to the objection.
9. Does formal logic cast any light on other areas of philosophy?
10. What is the point of attempting to analyse simple English expressions like 'if' and 'the'?
11. What is the relationship between the analysis of language and the analysis of mind?
12. Must a religious person believe in God?

END OF PAPER