



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

**CLASSICAL TRIPOS Part IB**  
**Paper 8**

**MODERN AND MEDIEVAL LANGUAGES TRIPOS Part IB**  
**Paper GL 18**

**PHILOSOPHY TRIPOS Part IB**  
**Paper 4**

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Easter 2021

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GREEK AND ROMAN PHILOSOPHY

Answer **three** questions, at least **one** from each Section.

All questions carry equal marks.

All essays should be uploaded on the same document.

Clearly identify each question and write the question number before each answer.

Please provide a word count for each essay.

**There is a word limit of 2000 words for each essay.**

Write your **candidate number** (not your name) on the front page of the document you upload.

**Irrelevance will be penalised.**

For candidates who choose to provide hand-written answers: **candidates who do not write legibly may find themselves at a grave disadvantage.**

**SECTION A**

- A1** Does the argument from opposites need to claim that life and death are opposites which come from one another? Would the argument work better if it claimed instead that embodiment and disembodiment are opposites?
- A2** Is there a better explanation than recollection for how perceptibly equal particulars can put us in mind of the ideally equal form?
- A3** Expound and assess the argument that a soul cannot be an attunement of a body.
- A4** “It is by the beautiful that beautiful things are beautiful” (*Phaedo* 100e, trans. D. Gallop). Is it?
- A5** If, as Socrates argues, death is desirable for philosophers, why did Socrates not commit suicide earlier?
- A6** Does the *Phaedo*’s Final Argument succeed in showing that souls are imperishable?
- A7** What of value is added to the *Phaedo* by its myths?

## SECTION B

- B1** τῶν δὴ πρώτων φιλοσοφησάντων οἱ πλεῖστοι τὰς ἐν ὕλης εἶδει μόνας ᾤθησαν ἀρχὰς εἶναι πάντων.

Of those who first philosophised, then, most thought that the first principles of all things were solely of the material type.

ARISTOTLE *Metaphysics* A.3, 983b6–8, trans. R. Barney

Is it correct to label the earliest Greek philosophers as materialists? Explain your answer.

- B2** θάλασσα ὕδωρ καθαρώτατον καὶ μιαρώτατον, ἰχθύσι μὲν πότιμον καὶ σωτήριον, ἀνθρώποις δὲ ἄποτον καὶ ὀλέθριον.

The sea is the purest and foulest water: for fish drinkable and life-sustaining; for men undrinkable and deadly.

HERACLITUS B61, trans. C. H. Kahn

What, if anything, are we supposed to learn from this?

- B3** οἱ δὲ φοροῦνται  
κωφοὶ ὁμῶς τυφλοὶ τε, τεθηπότες, ἄκριτα φύλα,  
οἷς τὸ πέλειν τε καὶ οὐκ εἶναι ταῦτόν νενόμισται  
κοῦ ταῦτόν, πάντων δὲ παλίντροπός ἐστι κέλευθος.

And they are carried  
Deaf and blind alike, dazed, uncritical tribes,  
By whom being and not-being have been thought both the same  
And not the same; and the path of all is backward-turning.

PARMENIDES B6.6–9, trans. D. Gallop

Explain the goddess' diagnosis of mortal error in Parmenides' poem.

- B4** Explain and evaluate Zeno of Elea's argument that if there are many things then they are both limited and unlimited in number.
- B5** **Either** (a) Anaxagoras claimed that "in everything there is a portion of everything". What is the best interpretation of this claim? Explain your answer.

**Or (b)** What is the best reconstruction of Democritus' argument for the indivisibility of an atom? Explain your answer.

- B6** In the *Protagoras*, "the many" claim that sometimes people act contrary to their judgement of what is better because they are overcome by pleasure, anger, or the like. Explain and assess Socrates' rejection of this view.
- B7** Does Socrates in the *Republic* have a compelling argument that the human soul is composed of precisely three parts? Explain your answer.
- B8** Can Aristotle give an adequate defence of his distinction between primary and secondary substances? Explain your answer.
- B9** ὥσπερ γὰρ αὐλητῇ καὶ ἀγαλματοποιῷ καὶ παντὶ τεχνίτῃ, καὶ ὅλως ὧν ἔστιν ἔργον τι καὶ πρᾶξις, ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ δοκεῖ τὰγαθὸν εἶναι καὶ τὸ εὖ, οὕτω δόξειεν ἂν καὶ ἀνθρώπῳ, εἴπερ ἔστι τι ἔργον αὐτοῦ.

For just as for a flute-player, or a sculptor, or any expert, and generally for all those who have some characteristic function or activity, the good—their doing well—seems to reside in their function, so too it would seem to be for the human being, if indeed there is some function that belongs to him.

ARISTOTLE *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.7, 1097b25–8, trans. C. J. Rowe

Critically assess the role of this argument in Aristotle's account of the human good.

- B10** **Either (a)**  
ἄτοπον δὲ τὸ μὴ οἶεσθαι ἔνεκά του γίγνεσθαι, ἐὰν μὴ ἴδωσι τὸ κινεῖν βουλευσάμενον. καίτοι καὶ ἡ τέχνη οὐ βουλευέται· καὶ εἰ ἐνῆν ἐν τῷ ξύλῳ ἡ ναυπηγική, ὁμοίως ἂν τῇ φύσει ἐποίει· ὥστ' εἰ ἐν τῇ τέχνῃ ἔνεστι τὸ ἔνεκά του, καὶ ἐν τῇ φύσει.

It is absurd not to think that a thing comes to be for something unless the thing which effects the change is seen to have deliberated. Art too does not deliberate. If the art of ship-building were present in the wood, it would act in the same way as nature; so if the "for something" is present in art, it is present in nature too.

ARISTOTLE *Physics* 2.8, 199b26–30, trans. W. Charlton

Is this a good argument for natural teleology? Explain your answer.

**Or (b)**

καθάπερ εἴ τι τῶν ὀργάνων φυσικὸν ἦν σῶμα, οἷον πέλεκυς· ἦν μὲν γὰρ ἂν τὸ πελέκει εἶναι ἡ οὐσία αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ τοῦτο.

It is as if some tool were a natural body, e.g. an axe; in that case what it is to be an axe would be its substance, and this would also be its soul.

ARISTOTLE *De Anima* 2.1, 412b11–13, trans. C. Shields

Is this a helpful analogy? Explain your answer.

**B11** Can the ancient sceptics successfully avoid the charge that it is impossible to live without belief (*apraxia*)? Answer with reference to **either** the Academics **or** the Pyrrhonists.

**B12** **Either (a)** If the atomic swerve happens without a cause, how does Epicurus think it contributes to the possibility of voluntary action?

**Or (b)** How can some actions be “up to us” in a Stoic cosmos?

**B13** Critically evaluate **either** the Epicureans’ **or** the Stoics’ attempt to show that knowledge can be attained through sense perception.

**END OF PAPER**