

PHILOSOPHY TRIPOS, PART IA

Thursday 1 June 2023

09.00–12.00

Paper 4

SET TEXTS

Answer **three** questions only, which must be chosen from **at least two** sections.

Write the number of the question at the beginning of each answer.

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

SECTION A

1. Is Socrates right to insist that we cannot know whether virtue can be taught without first knowing what virtue is?
2. 'The unsatisfactory ending of Plato's *Meno* is not to be blamed on the flaws in Socrates' methods but on the faults in *Meno's* character.' Discuss.
3. 'The so-called doctrine of recollection is neither necessary nor sufficient for resolving *Meno's* paradox.' Discuss.
4. 'Virtue appears to be present in those of us who may possess it as a gift from the gods.' (PLATO) Are we supposed to take Socrates' final proposal to *Meno* seriously?

SECTION B

5. 'I realized that it was necessary, once in the course of my life, to demolish everything completely and start again right from the foundations.'
(DESCARTES) Why did Descartes believe this demolition was necessary? Focusing on one sceptical argument in the *First Meditation*, describe and evaluate his attempt to 'demolish everything'.
6. Is the cogito an inference? Did Descartes think it was?
7. 'The *Meditations* would be vastly improved if all references to God were removed from it. After all, God plays no indispensable role in Descartes's argument.' Discuss.
8. 'Since on the one hand I have a clear and distinct idea of myself, as purely a thing that thinks and is not extended, and, on the other hand, I have a distinct idea of the body as a thing that is extended and does not think, it is certain that this I, that is to say my soul, which makes me what I am, is entirely and truly distinct from my body, and can be or exist without it.' (DESCARTES) Is this a good argument?

SECTION C

9. 'The state may have compelling reason to restrict certain highly offensive nuisances, even when they are harmless.' How might Mill respond to this statement?
10. Does Mill give us enough reason to think that free speech promotes the discovery of truth?
11. 'Some will object, that a comparison cannot fairly be made between the government of the male sex and the forms of unjust power which I have adduced in illustration of it, since these are arbitrary, and the effect of mere usurpation, while it on the contrary is natural.' (MILL) What is the most plausible formulation of this objection? Does Mill have a good response to it?
12. 'Mill's vision of marriage and family life is too radical to be realistic and too moralistic to be attractive.' Is this a fair criticism?