



# General Certificate of Education

## Philosophy 5171/6171

*PLY5 Texts*

# Mark Scheme

*2005 examination – June series*

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

## Texts PLY5

### Levels-of-Response Marking Criteria

Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria. Question-specific marking notes are provided for reference on the following pages.

#### Part (a)

**Total: 14 marks**

- (i) 2 marks: A full answer in accordance with the mark scheme.
- 1 mark: A partial answer.
- 0 marks: An incorrect response.
- (ii) 4-6 marks: The candidate will select and apply relevant aspects of the passage in a directed and coherent manner. There will be few, if any, errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- 1-3 marks: The candidate will select and apply some relevant aspects in a directed manner. Some points will be omitted and there may be lack of clarity at the lower end. Errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation may be present.
- 0 marks: No relevant aspects are selected.
- (iii) 4-6 marks: The candidate will select relevant material which displays a directed evaluative element. The central requirement of the question will be addressed in a coherent and well-expressed form.
- 1-3 marks: Some relevant material will be selected but evaluation or criticism may be lacking or misdirected. There may be errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- 0 marks: No relevant knowledge will be displayed.

**Part (b)****Total: 11 marks**

Knowledge and understanding of text, showing an awareness of the arguments developed within it. The ability to identify, select and apply ideas and examples employed in the development of the philosopher's position, which involves a capacity to interpret text.

- 9-11 marks: The candidate shows detailed knowledge and understanding of the positions, concepts and argument, displaying an ability to select and apply relevant material in a sustained, coherent and well-structured form.
- 6-8 marks: The candidate displays either a detailed knowledge and understanding of limited aspects of the relevant material or a wide-ranging but non-specific grasp of the material. They will select and apply relevant information, but not draw on it fully, or leave important details out. The answer will be coherent and direct, but could contain passages that are not expressed clearly, or fail to sustain relevance.
- 3-5 marks: The candidate displays either a basic knowledge and general understanding of the material, or a limited grasp of at least one topical idea, selecting some relevant as well as some irrelevant material - but some knowledge will be effectively deployed. The answer will only partially address the question and could contain passages that are expressed very badly. There may be much repetition or assertion.
- 0-2 marks: This response is seriously incoherent or fragmentary, displaying little or no relevant knowledge.

**Part (c)**

**Total: 25 marks**

The ability to interpret, analyse and evaluate philosophical argument, showing awareness of weaknesses and strengths in the Philosopher's position, and demonstrating the ability to express and defend their own positions, offering reasoned and supported judgements, and appropriate examples. This engages candidates' knowledge and understanding and their ability to select and apply relevant textual information. The candidate's ability to organise her/his response coherently and in good English will also be assessed.

- 20-25 marks: The candidate displays an ability to analyse, interpret and critically assess the issues and relevant evidence, supporting their own judgements with reasoned and considered argument. The response will read as an integrated whole developing in a coherent and fluent way. There will be few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- 15-19 marks: The candidate demonstrates an ability to analyse and evaluate some relevant material and to form judgements relevant to the requirements of the question. The arguments and/or supporting material will lack the imagination, insight or penetration characteristic of the top band. There may be occasional errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- 10-14 marks: The candidate will demonstrate a limited appreciation of the key issues. Supporting material may not always be well selected, but the ability to select some relevant material must be present. Lower marks may denote responses that are not always well integrated. Evaluation must be present but will tend to lack penetration and/or depth. Some errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation may be present.
- 5-9 marks: The candidate displays an ability to analyse and interpret a limited range of relevant material. Reasoned criticism will tend to be replaced by the assertion of positions. The question may be read as one-dimensional. There may be errors of reasoning and understanding. There may also be errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- 0-4 marks: The candidate demonstrates little or no ability to interpret, analyse or evaluate relevant material. Responses are likely to be incoherent in relation to the requirements of the question. They may be fragmentary. Errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation may be intrusive.

**1** *Text: Aristotle's "Nicomachean Ethics"*

**Total for this question: 50 marks**

**NB** The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(a) With close reference to the extract above:

(i) Identify the generally accepted formula. (2 marks)

The good man's view is the true one.

(ii) Outline Aristotle's account of true pleasures. (6 marks)

The standard by which we measure everything is the good man in his capacity as good. The good pleasures will be those he enjoys. Things which displease him will only be pleasurable to those in a corrupt state, they are not properly called 'pleasures'. It is the pleasures which accompany the activities of the good man that are properly called true or human.

(iii) Suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Aristotle's distinction between higher and lower pleasures. (6 marks)

- (a) The circularity problem: a good man is regarded as good because of the pleasures he pursues and good pleasures are those pursued by a good man.
- (b) What determines pleasure is a feeling or qualitative aspect and this is not confined to the good man.
- (c) Aristotle's view might lead to pleasure experts and this conflicts with the view that each of us is an expert on what gives us pleasure.
- (d) Aristotle needs to show that things other than pleasures are valuable.
- (e) The argument is only convincing when the pleasures are extreme. Examples might be given.
- (f) Aristotle confuses goodness and truth. Pleasures can be genuine **and** bad.
- (g) Hedonistic utilitarian objections.

(b) Describe and illustrate Aristotle's account of how we acquire moral virtue. (11 marks)

Aristotle distinguishes intellectual and moral virtue. We acquire intellectual virtue through being taught, moral virtue through habit. Moral virtue is not acquired through nature. Nature provides us with the capacity to receive moral virtue but that is all. Virtue is cultivated and developed through habit. We become virtuous by performing virtuous acts – right habits form the states of our character. Illustrations/analogy should be given. The actions we choose should be chosen for their own sake and must proceed from a firm and unchangeable character. These conditions mark off virtues from arts and crafts. There could be some discussion of the Doctrine of the Mean in conjunction with some of the above points.

(c) Assess Aristotle's claim that man has a function. (25 marks)

There should be some reference to the function argument:

- (a) If X has a function, its goodness resides in that function;
- (b) If man has a function, then his goodness lies in performing that function well;
- (c) As each of man's bodily organs has a function, then so does man;
- (d) This function is man's distinguishing feature – rationality;
- (e) The chief good for man is a life following or implying a rational principle.

### Critical Discussion

- (a) The crucial step is in proposition (c) above. The legitimacy of the inference from bodily organs to man should be discussed. Examples from the natural world might be used as counters to the function claim.
- (b) To say that, eg the function of the heart is to pump blood, adds nothing factually to simply saying the heart causes pumping of the blood. In referring to 'function' we assign a normative status to causation – but this is in the mind of the beholder. This is true of all teleological features and simply reflects our own interests.
- (c) Teleological arguments can only be defended (ultimately) on religious grounds, or, anthropomorphic conceptions of nature involve the pathetic fallacy in one form or another.
- (d) Identifying one common feature, rationality, results in false abstractions. Bradley-type arguments might be used here. To claim that rationality is an exclusive feature might also be questioned, eg is its possession an all or nothing affair?
- (e) Even if one accepted the function argument as factually correct, it won't do the work Aristotle requires of it. Morally, nothing follows from it.

- (f) The vain desires argument might be discussed together with the failure to establish **one** thing we all desire.
- (g) If our function was rationality, it would not follow that the exercise of that function would produce a morally good person – even if exercised to the highest degree.
- (h) Aristotle confuses what is good for us with moral goodness. Different senses of ‘good’ need to be distinguished.
- (i) Candidates may offer alternatives to rationality as distinguishing features of man.

**2** Text: Hume's "An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding" **Total for this question: 50 marks**

**NB** The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(a) With close reference to the extract above:

(i) What does Hume regard as the most contentious question of metaphysics? (2 marks)

The free-will problem or reconciling liberty and necessity.

(ii) Outline Hume's account of liberty. (6 marks)

Liberty does not mean randomness or a lack of connection between motives and actions so that we cannot infer one from the other. This would be contrary to fact. What is meant is a power of acting or not acting according to the determinations of the will. An account of liberty must be consistent with the facts and with itself.

(iii) Suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Hume's definition of 'liberty'. (6 marks)

- (a) Lack of felt constraint is not sufficient for describing an act as free. Counter examples are available, eg hypnotic trances.
- (b) Should Hume have distinguished constraint and felt constraint? This would invite the question of how we could know unfeared constraints are operating.
- (c) The above point could also be adapted against Hume's claim that all of us, except a prisoner in chains, possessed liberty.
- (d) Hume's account omits the most important feature of liberty, namely, the power of acting differently in the same circumstances.
- (e) Hume's account is closer to what we mean by social or political liberty as opposed to metaphysical liberty.
- (f) Hume's account will not accommodate what we mean by moral responsibility. Praise and blame are not **just** parts of a causal chain.
- (g) The status of the will is left obscure. If it is subject to causal determinism, then how is reconciliation possible? If it is not, how is it to be fitted into Hume's scheme of things?
- (h) If uniformity is common to both liberty and necessity, how can Hume explain **why** we feel differently about them?



- (i) If the essence of a free action is unconstrained acting on our desires, then the actions of a lunatic will turn out to be free.

- (b) Explain and illustrate Hume's distinction between ideas and impressions. (11 marks)

Hume is describing the contents of the mind. His account, in terms of ideas and impressions of the internal and external senses, is intended to be an exhaustive one. There is no residue. The contents are classed as perceptions which are divided into impressions and ideas. There is a further sub-division of sensation (bodily senses) and reflection (passions, emotions, desires). Ideas and impressions can be simple or complex – examples should be given. Ideas of imagination are explained in terms of novel combinations of simple ideas. There might be a contrast with ideas of memory which are closely tied to order/sequence. Ideas are dependent on impressions – Hume's empiricism. Ideas and impressions are distinguished in terms of force and vivacity. Impressions are the immediate objects of sense perception.

- (c) Assess the adequacy of Hume's definitions of 'cause'. (25 marks)

The definitions of cause are: an object followed by another, and where all the objects, similar to the first, are followed by objects similar to the second. Hume then offers a second formulation of this: where, if the first object had not been, the second had never existed. He then adds a further definition: an object followed by another, and whose appearance always conveys the thought to that other. The first definitions are regarded as philosophical, the second as psychological.

Candidates may refer to Hume's preceding discussion of the idea of necessary connection and his failure to find an impression of it in the relations of object to object, mind to body, mind to ideas or god to laws of nature. There is likely to be some discussion of constant conjunction, habit, together with examples, and repetition.

### Critical Discussion

- (a) The two philosophical definitions are not the same; the second is suggestive of causal **power** in a way that the first is not. The first accommodates a plurality of causes whereas the second does not.
- (b) The philosophical and psychological definitions are not the same in meaning. Examples such as night and day or Hume's secret causes may be used to illustrate differences.
- (c) What does Hume mean by 'similar'? Scientific examples might be used to show that similarity of appearance is not sufficient. We sometimes say that things are similar **because** of their causal powers. In other words, the similarity claim is made **after** the identification of causal powers.
- (d) There is too much emphasis on repetition. Causal connections can be inferred from single instances. Examples from astronomy or one-off experiments can be given.
- (e) The first definition fails to mark off accidents on a cosmic scale from genuine causal connections and allows in far too many regular 'accidents'. Hume could avoid this with his second formulation but would need to show how the second formulation was an inference from the first.

- (f) By combining (d) and (e) above, it could be argued that Hume's initial definition contains neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for causal connections. It can hardly be used as an adequate account of what we mean by 'cause'.
- (g) The psychological definition could be accused of presupposing causation rather than explaining it.
- (h) Natural necessity allows support for counterfactuals, Hume's account leaves this mysterious.
- (i) Hume's definitions require the separateness and distinctness of objects. This might reflect our ideas but does not imply that the causal relation holds between such separate and distinct objects or events.
- (j) The problem of simultaneous causation, eg the wind and the sea. How does Hume explain our assigning a causal role to one rather than the other?
- (k) The definitions, or Hume's account in general, neglect any active or inquiring agency on the part of the human mind. The over-reliance on the copy principle masks important differences, eg animals taking shelter on the arrival of a black cloud and a scientist assigning theoretical causal powers to a black hole.
- (l) The psychological definition is an unwelcome intrusion of subjectivity into what should be a purely philosophical analysis of a concept. It would be difficult to explain the imaginative leaps of some scientists on this definition. Important discoveries have been made through uncanny transitions.

**3** Text: Mill's "On Liberty"**Total for this question: 50 marks**

**NB** The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(a) With close reference to the extract above:

(i) Identify Mill's first reason for encouraging uncustomary things. (2 marks)

To see which are fit to survive as customs.

(ii) Outline Mill's case for encouraging independence of action. (6 marks)

Freedom of action allows one to develop one's own mode of being and this is important for its own sake. We should not be sheep-like. Differences in physical and spiritual needs should be catered for. It is not just a matter of different tastes – though that is important. Different people need different stimulations and environments. There are differences in what gives pleasure and pain.

(iii) Suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Mill's view of individual development (6 marks)

- (a) Mill's distinctions between 'best in itself' and 'being one's own' is an odd one for a utilitarian to make. It invites the objection that that utilitarian considerations could result in a clash.
- (b) Related to the above, Mill's position shows that utilitarian considerations are not decisive in settling conflicts with freedom – the absolute principles problem.
- (c) Mill might be accused of condoning the unusual simply because it is unusual.
- (d) Mill fails to distinguish individual variation within a fixed background of stability from the variation of the background.
- (e) Variation requires **some** level of conformity in order to get off the ground.
- (f) Mill's concession to diversity of the sources of pleasure and pain may count against the utilitarian claim that there is **one** thing we all desire, and, perhaps, to the libertarian claim that we all require diversity.
- (g) Is it true to say that people need widely varying conditions to flourish? Or, what is meant by a wide variety in a single society? Or, how varied can conditions become while maintaining cohesion as opposed to fragmentation?

- (h) Mill overestimates rationality. Some people can make damaging choices. Are they worth it simply because they are their own?
- (i) Candidates may offer some of the alleged benefits of paternalism with examples. The examples could be on the individual level or on the level of society or at an international level – societies becoming too individualistic and decadent leaving themselves open to attack.

(b) Explain and illustrate any two of Mill's applications of the Harm Principle. (11 marks)

There should be a statement of what the Harm Principle is: the individual is not held accountable for actions which only affect himself; it is only in the case of actions which are harmful to others that he is. Mill discusses a number of applications of the Principle. Some appear to be exceptions to the Principle but are justified in different ways by Mill. Candidates may select from a wide range. Amongst the most popular are likely to be the drunkenness affecting the individual alone and the individual with a social duty to perform (eg policeman) or in business various interests of others can be harmed, but Mill talks of fair competition and free trade. Some examples from modern capitalism may be used as illustrations. Other applications that might be considered include the sale and purchase of drugs or poison, fornication, gambling, birth control, slavery, women's issues and the importing of opium. Modern equivalents might be used if they involve the same principles/justifications.

(c) Assess the strength of Mill's case for freedom in the expression of opinion. (25 marks)

Mill's case consists of a number of arguments. One of the most sophisticated is the fallibility argument which Mill regarded as decisive. Those who suppress opinion are not infallible yet they are deciding for others. To deny others the opportunity of judging amounts to an assumption of infallibility. Government suppression cannot be justified even in the case of dangerous opinion. Liberty of discussion is the very condition which allows us to assume truth for the purposes of action. The supposed utility of a belief is itself an opinion and therefore requires discussion otherwise the infallibility assumption is merely shifted from truth to utility.

Mill advocates a free market of ideas: it is only when all possible views are allowed to compete that the truth may eventually arise. Given mistaken views can contain elements of truth, they too should be discussed. There is also the need to subject accepted truths to questioning in order to maintain their vigour. Preventing free discussion may inhibit experiments in living which would conflict with a healthy, liberal society and, presumably, with Mill's conception of man as a progressive being.

### Critical Discussion

- (a) Some have argued that a censor need not assume infallibility (Gibbs) – he may not feel it at all. This misses Mill's point. Mill is saying that deciding for others **logically** amounts to an assumption of infallibility; the objection, for Mill, would be irrelevant psychology.
- (b) There can be a genuine clash between truth and utility. It is not satisfactory to claim that truth is part of utility as one can think of cases where they are separate and distinct. Credit should be given for examples where truth could damage the public interest.

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- (c) Related to (b) is the problem for a utilitarian of holding what appear to be two absolute principles which can conflict. Candidates may approach this from a utilitarian standpoint. If truth turned out to be part of utility would this be a contingent matter?
- (d) There may be discussion of incitement cases, especially in the light of the prison sentence given to the Muslim cleric. It might be argued that censorship can be beneficial. Credit should be given for knowledge of Mill's response (angry crowd example) to this issue.
- (e) If one accepts suppression in some limited cases, how do we set out the criteria for identifying those cases and to what do we appeal as a justification?
- (f) Mill has been accused of being obsessive in regard to freedom. Defence of Mill:
- (i) giving theoretical support for your views is not a characteristic of obsessiveness;
  - (ii) there is a distinction between obsessiveness and vigilance.
- (g) In relation to (f)(ii), candidates may discuss vigilance in relation to preserving a free society. Historical examples may be used to illustrate the point.
- (h) The free discussion of issues advocated by Mill is empty without access to the mass media.
- (i) There is no guarantee that Mill's free market of ideas will produce the truth. It can be countered that it does, at least, ensure the possibility – which is more than can be said for the alternative.
- (j) Revitalizing a view is often done by new ways of presentation rather than by limitless questioning.
- (k) Related to (j), limitless questioning can lead to scepticism and set up a further clash with utility.
- (l) Mill's freedom is a noble principle but is open to abuse. Sensationalism, intrusion and profit can be pursued under the guise of free inquiry. However, they can only be unmasked through further free discussion. Valuable principles or institutions can be abused but that is not in itself sufficient reason for surrendering them.
- (m) Mill underestimated the protection required for the weak – especially in a media dominated society.
- (n) Mill overestimated the level of rationality in a society. Reply: his estimation is only that which is consistent with democratic participation.
- (o) The objection in (n) should be taken as an incentive to improve levels of rationality – not to suppress free speech.

4 Text: Nietzsche's "Beyond Good and Evil"

Total for this question: 50 marks

**NB** The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(a) With close reference to the extract above:

(i) What does Nietzsche regard as a paradox? (2 marks)

To sacrifice God for the sake of nothingness.

(ii) Outline the three stages of Nietzsche's ladder of religious cruelty. (6 marks)

He identifies three important stages:

- (a) Sacrifice to God of human beings, even those most precious;
- (b) Sacrifice of strongest instincts, their nature;
- (c) Sacrifice of God himself (all that was sacred).

(iii) Suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Nietzsche's account of religious development. (6 marks)

- (a) Nietzsche neglects the Christian belief of God's ultimate sacrifice **for** man.
- (b) Religion, or the history of religion, is seen in terms of sacrifice. But it should not be seen exclusively in these terms. There are other features, eg understanding of the world, that could just as easily be emphasised.
- (c) Nietzsche's second stage may equally be said to represent moral progress if dangerous motives are superseded by more benevolent ones.
- (d) The look of the ascetic is open to other interpretations – including the one the ascetic would give.
- (e) It is not obviously clear how one goes about sacrificing an instinct. This is especially so if such instincts are nature's inheritance and have deterministic properties.
- (f) There is a weak explanation of sacrifice in the third stage, with the reference to whatever is left.
- (g) Why should there be self-directed cruelty? We need independent reasons for supposing there to be such a thing and for assigning such importance to it.

- (h) We are owed an explanation for the ultimate motives for sacrifice.
- (i) There is a strain in Nietzsche between two kinds of explanation, one in terms of conscious reasons, the other in terms of hidden purposes. The language he uses does not make clear which kind is being used.
- (j) the acceptance of Christianity, for example, may involve a change in behaviour, but it does not follow that the reason for its acceptance is to bring about this change. Behaviour can be seen differently in the light of accepting this new way of seeing/experiencing the world and our place in it.
- (k) Removes religious practises from their context in order to portray them as absurd.

(b) Explain what Nietzsche means by the will to power.	<i>(11 marks)</i>
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There are a number of sources within the text which candidates may draw on. The most likely features to be mentioned are as follows:

A crucial point is that the will to power is organic, life itself, life-enhancing. It is fundamental. Our entire instinctual life is to be understood in terms of one basic form of the will, i.e. the will to power. All energies within us can be seen in terms of it. Nietzsche includes procreation and alimentation in this. All organic functions could be derived from it. To deny it is to deny life itself. Any belief system which fails to take account of this is therefore life-denying. (Christianity is likely to be referred to as the chief culprit). There may be some reference to such belief systems reversing the natural order. The will to power is universal and unconditional. A thorough 'physio-psychology' study culminates in the will to power – a basic fact that is beyond good and evil. Failure to recognise this has vitiated the history of moral philosophy (examples might be given). Evolutionary references may figure.

(c) Assess Nietzsche's account of noble values.	<i>(25 marks)</i>
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A selection of the following material is likely to be used as the basis of a discussion.

Social divisions are regarded as important for inner progress – a political hierarchical structure is justifiable. The aristocracy should **use** society and not be a function of it. Corruption is the aristocracy giving way or surrendering ground. Life itself in essence involves exploitation, the overpowering of the weak etc. This is an organic function of the will to power and is thus beyond morality.

The distinction between master and slave morality and the characteristics of each. The inversion of morality by the herd. How moral terms become defined differently, eg 'good'.

Value distinctions are applied first to people and derivatively to actions. The history of moral philosophy has inverted this relation. The noble are the creators of value. This distinction between creators and receivers of value. The admiration of Viking morality, its harshness and the consistency of the harshness, might be discussed. The importance of reverence.

### Critical Discussion

- (a) Does the emphasis on reverence succeed in distinguishing fear from respect?
- (b) Nietzsche is wavering between giving an account that somehow transcends morality and yet is itself moral. Any thesis that carries implications for how others are treated is irreducibly moral. It is also open to rejection on moral grounds. (Russell rejected it on these grounds).
- (c) If Nietzsche's account is beyond morality, then how can it have any implications for morality? Candidates may explore issues relating to the fact-value distinction. Alternatively they may ask whether Nietzsche can provide reasons why we should care about his account. An appeal to truth could raise consistency problems with Nietzsche's Perspectivism.
- (d) The social divisions considered so important for Nietzsche may benefit some individuals, but other consequences might be discussed. Examples could be used to provide a quite negative account of such divisions. If this is established, then the masses would have every good reason to oppose or overthrow divisive systems. Nietzsche could be accused of providing a recipe for social discontent and for international chaos if nations treated each other on similar lines.
- (e) Seeing the use/trampling of the weak as an organic function is an unwelcome intrusion of pseudo-science or evolutionary principles into ethics, cf. Spencer's justification of the genocide of American Indians. Such judgements are ultimately moral no matter how they are disguised.
- (f) The fact that life **can** involve exploiting others does not mean that that is its essence. Life also involves other features. There is a problem with the rationale of selection. Nietzsche needs a thorough reduction, theoretical backing and predictive power to establish his case. What he provides are selected historical allusions.
- (g) There could be a Sartrean-type critique of the claim that moral judgements are primarily directed at the agent/personality/psychological type rather than the action. We can only make judgements about such types through the actions they perform. It is difficult to establish a radical distinction here.
- (h) Herd morality provides the springboard for the creators of value. They do not create from nothing.
- (i) Nietzsche's account is naïve or romantic. There could be criticism from a Marxian perspective. The importance of material conditions is not recognised. One cannot hope to understand the creation and sustaining of value systems without reference to the economic organisation of the society in question. Such values cannot be simply transported, or even compared as values, to a differently organized system – to think that it can is romantic folly. This sort of criticism might come from a different direction along the lines that, eg Viking morality is admirable – **in** Viking society.
- (j) Candidates may approach their critical discussion through a consideration of the historical accuracy, interpretation and selectivity of Nietzsche's examples. Counter examples are possible, a different account of historical development and moral progress is possible.
- (k) Nietzsche's thesis is open to similar objections made by Socrates against Callicles, eg the herd are now the stronger etc.



5 Text: Russell's "The Problems of Philosophy"

Total for this question: 50 marks

**NB** The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(a) With close reference to the extract above:

(i) What is Kant's method said to fail to explain? (2 marks)

The certainty of *a priori* knowledge.

(ii) Outline Russell's reasons for rejecting Kant's solution. (6 marks)

Kant needs to show why the facts of experience must conform to logic and arithmetic. To say that these are contributed by us achieves nothing. If they are part of our natures and our natures were to change, then two plus two could make five – this is logically impossible. The appeal to time being contributed by us fails to solve the problem; it re-emerges.

(iii) Suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Russell's treatment of Kant's position. (6 marks)

- (a) He fails to do justice to the noumena/phenomena distinction. Some concession is made to this regarding the imposition of temporal concepts, but reference should also have been made to causality.
- (b) There could be counter arguments to the claims regarding our natures, eg empirical facts need to be distinguished from transcendental ones.
- (c) Empirical natures may change but does this mean that they could change without limit?
- (d) Kant is laying down conditions to which any experience must conform if there is to be experience.
- (e) The problem is misdescribed. Kant does not have to explain how empirical objects conform to arithmetic. It may also be pointed out that  $2 + 2 = 4$  does not always work: 2 pints of water + 2 pints of pure alcohol will not give you 4 pints of liquid.
- (f) Alternatives to Kant are philosophically more embarrassing, eg Mill's high-level inductive generalizations or Russell's subsisting universals.
- (g) If Russell's universals are not treated as independent entities, but as our own abstractions, then we get the same problem that Russell finds in Kant – overdependency on ourselves.

- (h) Physicists' applications of non-Euclidean geometry to the space around black holes or to inter-stellar distances has robbed Euclid's geometry of universality.

- (b) Explain and illustrate Russell's position on universals. (11 marks)

Russell's theory of universals is intended to solve the problem of *a priori* knowledge. Universals are arrived at by extracting common features from eg white things, just acts etc. There might be comparisons with Plato's Forms. Universals like justice or whiteness are distinguished from particular just acts and particular white things. The particulars are temporal and constitute the world of sense experience. Universals have a different kind of being – they subsist.

Universals express properties, substantives and relations. Relations are the most fundamental as traditional empiricist responses require the relation of resemblance to set up the comparison procedure. Universals are not mental,

- (i) propositions containing relational universals are true, if they are true, independently of what we think,
- (ii) mentalism would rob them of their universality. They subsist in a timeless world independent of thought. All *a priori* knowledge concerns relations between universals and this accounts for its certitude and universality.

- (c) Assess Russell's distinction between sense-data and physical objects. (25marks)

The main argument used to distinguish sense-data from physical objects is Russell's version of the argument from phenomenal variability: Russell's table. Perceptions of the table vary from different viewpoints and under different perceptual conditions. As the table cannot be supposed to change whereas what we perceive does, what we perceive is not the table itself but sense-data of the table. Sense-data are private and last as long as they are perceived, physical objects are public and more or less permanent. There may be reference to the private/public space distinction. We infer the existence of the real table as the cause of our sense-data. The existence of the external world has the status of an extremely probable hypothesis that explains, most economically and systematically, the occurrence of the sense-data.

Russell's version of the dead star argument can also be used: if the sun had exploded in the last seven minutes, we would still be seeing something, though not the sun, ie a sense-datum of the sun.

### Critical Discussion

- (a) Reid's objection: the fact that things vary under different conditions is what we should expect and is completely predictable – the fact that things behave in accordance with our expectations is no reason for doubting that we perceive them.
- (b) The fallacy of reifying appearances – the object appears differently but the appearances are not themselves things.
- (c) The variations in the colour of the table are not chameleon-like, they are shades of brown and calling it 'brown' is not to show undue favouritism.

- (d) If all we are aware of are sense-data then we can never know that they are caused by physical objects; we can never know that their causes are physical in nature.
- (e) How can the existence of the external world be regarded as a hypothesis? Any hypothesis assumes that there is such a world.
- (f) How could the concept of probability be applied to such a ‘hypothesis’? What are the comparisons? What are the calculation procedures?
- (g) There is a difficulty in referring to sense-data as representations without independent knowledge of what they represent, cf Russell’s analogy with catalogues – we would not have the concept of a catalogue if all we were aware of were catalogues.
- (h) Russell says he ‘seems’ to be sitting at his table without telling us what would count as ‘really’ sitting at his table. The reasonableness of doubt might be discussed.
- (i) The dead star argument requires premises about physical objects to get started but concludes that we are not aware of such things.
- (j) Ayer’s objection: is it any more paradoxical to say that our eyes see into the past than it is to say that we do not see physical objects?
- (k) Russell thinks that there is some kind of correspondence between the relative position of physical objects in physical space and sense-data in private space. This could only be known if we could stand outside both spaces and this is impossible.

6 Text: Ayer's "Language, Truth and Logic"

Total for this question: 50 marks

**NB** The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(a) With close reference to the extract above:

(i) What does Ayer regard as a characteristic of all genuine problems? (2 marks)

They are theoretically capable of being solved.

(ii) Outline Ayer's attempt to deal with the problem of induction. (6 marks)

It is essentially a pragmatic solution. He regards the traditional problem of induction as a fictitious problem – it is incapable of a solution. Success in practice is what matters and the fact that we cannot give a logical guarantee of its continued success does not make its acceptance irrational. 'Rationality' is to be defined in terms of being guided by past experience.

(iii) Suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Ayer's treatment of the problem of induction. (6 marks)

- (a) That we cannot conceive of a solution does not have to mean that the problem is fictitious **or** that it is not a factual problem does not mean that there is no problem.
- (b) Humean/sceptical arguments may be used to show that the credibility of science is impaired by this problem, e.g. it is an instinctive belief, or that we are in a similar position to Russell's chicken.
- (c) The pragmatic justification misses the point that science aims to understand **how** the world works and not just to predict the course of our sensations, the latter is possible without the former – Plato's cave could be adapted to make this point.
- (d) Similar remarks apply to Ayer's point about environmental control. It is not just about control; there is the question of how such control is possible.
- (e) The pragmatic solution can itself be accused of circularity.
- (f) Some research in sub-atomic physics has little to do with predicting sensations or environmental control.
- (g) Ayer defines 'rationality' in such a way as to make his thesis true by definition.
- (h) Is Ayer saying anything more philosophically sophisticated than Hume's "nature will maintain her rights"?

- (i) Candidates may question whether Ayer is right to claim that a solution is logically impossible. Is all talk of natural necessity to be ruled out *a priori*?

- (b) Explain and illustrate Ayer's position on *a priori* knowledge. (11 marks)

Ayer denies that any general proposition concerning matters of fact can be known with certainty so how are the propositions of logic and mathematics to be treated? Mill's view of mathematics as high-level empirical hypotheses is rejected – they cannot be falsified, we will not allow this. Any apparent falsity will be explained without impairing the truth of the proposition. Such propositions are necessarily true because they are analytic; true because of the definitions we have given of the terms. Examples from arithmetic or geometry will illustrate this. Such analytic propositions are tautologies and give no information regarding matters of fact; they merely unfold the definitions we have given to terms. The sense of invention, surprise and discovery in mathematics is explained in terms of the complexities of the definitions. Geometry is not essentially about physical space; all that is required for its truth/validity is self-consistency.

- (c) Assess Ayer's analysis of religious language. (25 marks)

For Ayer, any attempt to prove the existence of, or even talk about, a transcendent being is doomed to fail. All such talk is ruled out of court by the Verification Principle. References to God are metaphysical and there can be no such subject as metaphysics. Religious propositions carry no experiential implications. Belief in an after-life is not a genuine hypothesis; the 'soul' is a metaphysical term. Mysticism/religious experience are ruled out, attempts to talk about them must result in nonsense given that they cannot be fully captured in sentences. They provide material for psycho-analytical study. A general motive for religious belief is diagnosed: inability of people to determine their own destiny, and for scientists who believe a lack of confidence in the validity of their own hypotheses.

### Critical Discussion

- (a) Ayer's thesis rests on the validity of the Verification Principle. There are serious difficulties in accepting it as an all-encompassing theory of meaning. Its own status is problematic: if it is not analytic or empirically verifiable then it fails in its own terms. Attempts to make it analytic may be discussed but these must face obvious difficulties:
- (i) it would be self-contradictory to deny it;
  - (ii) it would provide us with no knowledge other than definitional knowledge;
  - (iii) it would be known *a priori*;
  - (iv) we would not allow it to be false.
- (b) Even if verificationism is accepted as an adequate account of factual meaning, it will not follow that this is the only meaning that there is. Religious propositions should be treated as counter-examples to the claim that all meaning is factual meaning.

- (c) Ayer's dismissal of religious experience is too simplistic. That religious/awesome experiences cannot adequately be put into words that were never designed to fit them may not be a particularly damaging objection. Analogies may be made with certain forms of aesthetic experience.
- (d) Wittgenstein/Winch-type claims that religion is a language game with its own internal criteria for meaning and significance and cannot be judged by other criteria.
- (e) Verificationist reply to (d): even if the internal criteria point is accepted it will not follow that all 'language games' lie on a level. There is also some difficulty in understanding what Wittgenstein meant by 'language games'. Giving commands, hoping, wishing all seem to be examples, but they are hardly comparable to religious belief.
- (f) Religious language has a function – but Ayer would reply that such a function was non-cognitive. He could offer a similar analysis to that of ethical propositions which he allows to have a function.
- (g) Some religions do involve making factual claims about the world and these have to be treated on their merits. The truth of a religious claim is not, however, exhausted by descriptions of states of affairs. It could still be argued that this does not totally destroy their evidential status.
- (h) Ayer's motivational account is *ad hominem* and should be treated accordingly. Counter-examples are possible. Ayer's thesis could be reversed: Christian belief makes the believer feel inadequate. Motivational accounts fail to address philosophical issues.
- (i) Hick's attempt at eschatological verification may be discussed, ie whether it is a genuine hypothesis, whether we can meaningfully discuss it in our language.
- (j) Religious systems provide ultimate understanding, provide a reason for their being something rather than nothing. They may provide scientists who are not unhappy with their hypotheses with such understanding.
- (k) Candidates may question Ayer's claim that there has been a universal misunderstanding of the grammar of human languages. Is this a likely hypothesis?
- (l) Some religious language is non-propositional, but Ayer could argue that the use of signs, symbols, the investing of significance, presupposes propositional language. If that presupposition is shown to be meaningless, then all that follows from it would, at best, have some non-cognitive function.