

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
FACULTY OF ARTS



MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 1001 History of Philosophy

Date: Monday 19 January 2009

Time: 8.00 -10.00

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

**Answer one question from each section.
Please use a separate foolscap for each question.**

Section A: Ancient Philosophy

1. Discuss the contribution to Philosophy made by the Presocratics.
2. Outline and discuss Plato's theory of Forms or Ideas.
3. How does Aristotle deal with the problem of change?
4. Compare and contrast the philosophical views of the Epicureans and the Stoics.

Section B: Medieval Philosophy

5. Discuss any aspect of Augustine's thought that you find philosophically interesting.
6. Outline and discuss **either** Anselm's 'ontological' proof for the existence of God **or** Aquinas' 'five ways'.
7. What exactly is 'the problem of universals'? How did medieval philosophers deal with it?

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 1003 Philosophical Anthropology

Date: Tuesday 9th June 2009

Time: 16.45 – 19.45

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer one question from each section

Please use a separate foolscap for each answer.

Section A: Philosophy of Language

1. Peter Serracino Inglott believes that the analysis of a joke can well serve us to understand the nature of language. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.
2. “Language is the defining characteristic of a human being.” Discuss.
3. “A theory of language production must be able to account for *both* the existence of conventional elements subject only to determination by agreement of a group, *and* universal features which are imposed on any language just by the objective way the world is made.” *Peopled Silence*, p. 76. Discuss.

Section B: Philosophy of Perception

4. In the *De Anima* Aristotle discusses the nature of living things and their different operations. Give a critical account of what he says.
5. “The five senses are the gateway through which we experience everything that happens around us.” Discuss.
6. Kant sought to combine the insights of the empiricists and the rationalists, while rejecting the mistakes of both. How exactly did he do it?

Section C: Philosophy of Action

7. Explain the difference between something that merely *happens* to someone – the events one undergoes – and the various things one genuinely *does*.
8. “There are as many actions as there are transitive bodily movements”; “There are as many actions as there are possible descriptions of what is going on”. Which, if any, of the two should we accept?
9. In what sense, if any, is there freedom of the will?

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 1006 History of Philosophy

Date: Monday 8th June 2009

Time: 9.15 – 11.15

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer one question from each section

Please use a separate foolscap for each answer.

Section A: Modern Philosophy

1. Trace the steps by which Descartes moves from a position of universal doubt to arrive at an indubitable starting-point for his philosophy.
2. Compare and contrast the views of Spinoza and Leibniz on substance.
3. ‘The mind, in all its thoughts and reasonings, hath no other immediate object but its own ideas.’ (Locke). How did Berkeley react to Locke’s claim and what conclusions did he derive from it?

Section B: Contemporary Philosophy

4. “Contemporary German philosophy takes different approaches to what is considered the goal of philosophy”. Discuss.
5. “Reactions in the history of philosophy tend to be overreactions.” Discuss in relation to existentialism and structuralism.
6. “The linguistic turn in contemporary philosophy is particularly evident in analytic philosophy.” Discuss.

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 1009 Augustine of Hippo's Philosophy

Date: Wednesday 27th May 2009

Time: 11.45 – 12.45

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Choose only ONE question.

1. Which circumstances in Augustine's early life led him to embrace philosophy? Which philosophy did he embrace, and why?
2. "Saint Augustine's interest in the philosophical life was awakened by his reading of the Hortensius, a dialogue of Cicero which has since been lost. From that day on, he was consumed with the love of wisdom, and as time went on, he thought of this discovery as his first step on the way of sorrows which was to lead him to God" (Etienne Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*). Discuss.
3. Discuss the major sources and arguments in Augustine's formulation of his theory of *eudaimonia* in *On Happiness (De beata vita)*.
4. "Showing and Telling". Write an essay delineating Augustine's theory of learning with particular reference to *The Teacher (De Magistro)*, and the first book of his *Confessions*.
5. "Augustine can be considered as the *Father of Christian Political Activism*." Do you agree with this statement? Discuss with reference to Book 19 of his *The City of God*.

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 1014 Political Philosophy

Wednesday 17th June 2009

13.00 – 15.00

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer two questions, one from each section.

Section A

1. ‘Political obligation’ is the phrase used to refer to the duty of the citizen to acknowledge the authority of the state and obey its laws. On what grounds is this duty based and at what point can the citizen be released from it?
2. Does law enforce moral standards, or should it try to? How much freedom should the law allow the individual, and on what issues?
3. ‘The modern battle about equality is fought not between those who support the principle and those who reject it, but between different views about where and how equality should be applied.’ Discuss.
4. Should benefits be distributed according to merit, according to rights, or according to needs? Give reasons for your answer.

Section B

5. Compare and contrast the views of Hobbes and Locke on the ‘state of nature’ and the formation of civil society.
6. ‘Rousseau’s *Social Contract* presents some of the loftiest ideals any political philosopher has articulated. At the same time, its ideas have led to some of the lowest of human actions, such as the French Revolution’s Reign of Terror.’ Discuss.
7. Discuss J.S. Mill’s claim that ‘the only purpose for which power can rightfully be exercised over any member of the civilized community against his will is to prevent harm to others.’
8. ‘The central problem addressed by Marx was human suffering, and its relationship to politics and economics.’ Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
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DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

ASSESSMENT TEST: Semester 1, 2008-2009
STUDY UNIT: **PHI 1050 Plato's Symposium**
DATE: Tuesday 20 January
TIME: 15.30 – 16.30

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Either

1. What is love? How does Plato deal with this theme in the Symposium?

Or

2. Discuss even in the light of your own experience and reading, Socrates'/Diotima's speech in the Symposium.

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DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

ASSESSMENT TEST: Semester 1, 2008-2009

STUDY UNIT: **PHI 1090 Philosophical Problems and how to tackle them**

DATE: Tuesday 27 January 2009

TIME: 18.00 – 19.00

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer all questions in Section A and one only from Section B.

Section A (20 marks in all; 4 marks for each question)

1. Which are the three most important forms of argumentation? Describe each briefly.
2. What do we mean when we say that a set of statements are ‘consistent’?
3. Give the (a) contrary (b) subcontrary (c) contradictory (d) superaltern, if any, of the following “Some student is not a philosopher”.
4. Give the simple and accidental converses, if any, of the following:
 - (a) No student is a philosopher.
 - (b) Some student is a philosopher.
5. What is a fallacy? Give two examples.

Section B (80 marks)

1. To what extent is our freedom limited by human nature?
2. How can we judge whether our actions are good or bad?
3. What conditions need to be satisfied for any government to be considered legitimate and just?

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 1070 Plotinus

Date: Tuesday 2nd June 2009

Time: 15.30 – 16.30

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer the following question.

“(C)onsciousness must cease splitting itself into two, and come to coincide with our true self, that higher level of tension and unity.” Discuss.

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 1080 Marsilio Ficino

Date: Friday 5th June 2009

Time: 18.00 – 19.00

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer the following question.

“Ficino’s care for the souls of mankind came from profound love.” Discuss.

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 1102 Ethics I&II

Date: Thursday 28th May 2009

Time: 13.00 – 15.00

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer two questions, one from each section.

Section A

1. Which definition of the word ‘good’ in moral contexts (objectivist, subjectivist, functionalist) do you find convincing? Give reasons for your answer.
2. Aristotle claims that everyone wants to be happy. What is happiness? Is it the fulfilment of love, fidelity to law or the maximization of communication?
3. “Human action is not just a movement; it involves reason, desire, intention, freedom and responsibility.” Discuss.

Section B

4. What do we mean when we say that Aristotle and Aquinas’ approach to ethics is ‘teleological’? Illustrate your answer with examples.
5. Show how the Enlightenment and Pietism influenced Kant's deontological ethics.
6. “Utilitarianism is a combination of two principles: (i) the consequentialist principle and (ii) the hedonistic principle.” Discuss.

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 2003 Metaphysics

Date: Friday 5th June 2009

Time: 16.45 – 19.45

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer any three questions.

1. How appropriate is it to include the study of traditional Metaphysics as an essential element in the formation of a philosopher?
2. Why did Aristotle consider his theory of causality the backbone of his metaphysics?
3. Aristotle was convinced that the theories of Heraclitus and Parmenides showed a flagrant disregard for sense evidence. He therefore formulated the theory of act and potency as a more plausible solution to the problem of being and change. Give a full account of Aristotle's position.
4. Either
 - (a) Explain Aristotle's theory of hylomorphism.Or
 - (b) What is a thing? Answer with reference to Aristotle's views on substance.
5. "To ask: "Who made the universe?" is a perfectly legitimate question. But to ask: "Who made God?" is to show that you have not yet grasped well the concept 'God'." Explain.
6. Taking any **one** recent book or article you have read as your main point of reference, argue whether it is possible to formulate a satisfactory answer to the question: "Why does God permit the existence of so much evil in the world He himself created?"

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 2004 Philosophy of the Social Sciences

Date: Friday 29th May 2009

Time: 18.00 – 20.00

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer two questions, one from each section.

Section A

1. In what sense of the meaning of 'science' might one say that both the natural and social sciences are scientific?
2. Discuss how the issues concerning (a) the fallibility and ambiguity of perception and (b) the theory-laden nature of observation, bear upon the search for truth in the social sciences.

Section B

3. Discuss the claim that the discipline of anthropology (as an effort to understand alien societies) presupposes the falsity of cultural relativism.
4. Compare and contrast two competing perspectives on the relation between the individual and society.

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 2005 Philosophy of Religion

Date: Monday 1st June 2009

Time: 8.00 – 10.00

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer one question from each section.

Please use a separate foolscap for each answer.

Section A: Philosophy of Religion

1. Is one restricted to using metaphor when speaking about God?
2. "The arguments for the existence of God constitute one of the finest attempts of the human mind to break out of the world and go beyond the sensible or phenomenal realm of experience". Discuss with reference to any kind of proof for the existence of God.
3. Evaluate *either* Baruch Spinoza's 'pantheism' *or* Immanuel Kant's understanding of God in terms of the experience of moral obligation.

Section B: Islamic Philosophy

4. Discuss the various definitions and aims of metaphysics according to the Islamic philosophers.
5. Discuss the relation between philosophy and religion according to Ibn Rushd.
6. Discuss the ethical thinking of Al-Kindî.

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 2009 Contemporary Continental Philosophy

Date: Wednesday 27th May 2009

Time: 11.45 – 13.45

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer two questions, one from each section.

Section A: Critical Theory

1. Explain what Critical Theory is and discuss how Second Generation Critical Theorists (such as Marcuse, Adorno or Horkheimer) compare and contrast with the prevailing Marxist orthodoxy to which they were opposed.
2. According to Habermas, the Public Sphere represents a critical space for the free and uncoerced expression of citizen participation. Discuss this claim with reference to Habermas' position that language contains within itself the very principles that underpin the demands for such participation.

Section B: Structuralism/Poststructuralism

3. Making reference to concepts such as 'emancipation', 'reification', and 'alienation', discuss the nature of the Self from a Critical Theorist's perspective and contrast it to a Structuralist/Poststructuralist account.
4. "We live in an age of kitch, kiosks, neon lights, automobiles. We live in an age of surfaces." Making reference to any poststructuralist of your choice, discuss this statement in the context of a discussion of 'meaning' and 'structure'.

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 2010 Modernism/Postmodernism Debate

Date: Wednesday 3rd June 2009

Time: 15.30 – 17.30

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer two questions, one from each section.

Section A: Ethics and Postmodernism

1. Discuss Charles Taylor's remark that "... the popular 'postmodern' variants of [authenticity] of our day, which have attempted to delegitimize horizons of significance, as we see with Derrida, Foucault and their followers, are indeed proposing deviant forms."
2. Discuss the questions why mere difference cannot itself be the ground of equal value and why there must be substantive agreement on value so that the formal principle of equality does not become empty.

Section B: Politics and Postmodernism

3. Discuss Taylor's reflections on the second malaise of Modernity (i.e., instrumental Reason) and explain how they follow the same lines of argumentation (i.e., method) as his deliberations on the meaning of Authenticity.
4. Discuss what Taylor means by Authenticity, Instrumental Reason and Fragmentation in the context of a broader discussion of how, in their contemporary modes, they are reciprocally re-enforcing in furthering conditions for political despotism.

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 2011 Philosophy of Communication

Date: Thursday 11th June

Time: 16.45 – 17.45

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer one question.

1. What necessary conditions must be satisfied for the formulation of an adequate theory of communication?
2. Compare and contrast any two philosophers from the different branches of the philosophy of communication.

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 2012 Existentialism

Date: Tuesday 26th May

Time: 18.00 – 19.00

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer one question.

1. Outline the connection between Angst, the anticipation of death and the sense of life's absurdity in the philosophy of existentialism.
2. 'Existentialism articulates a concept of the self that is opposed to the Cartesian model.' Discuss.
3. What, if any, is the Existentialists' debt to Husserl?

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DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

ASSESSMENT TEST: Semester 1, 2008-2009

STUDY UNIT: **PHI 2013 Postmodernism and Literature**

DATE: Wednesday 28 January

TIME: 11.45 – 12.45

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer One question.

1. What are the reasons for McHale's identifying science-fiction as the best example of postmodernist fiction?
2. "Historical writing is challenged by postmodernist fiction." Discuss.
3. "One strategy of postmodern fiction writers is to narrate a world and then un-narrate it." Discuss.

**UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
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ASSESSMENT TEST: Semester 1, 2008-2009
STUDY UNIT: **PHI 2015 Political Theory III**
DATE: Thursday 22 January
TIME: 10.30 – 11.30

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Either

(a) Discuss the relationship between justice and democracy.

Or

(b) Compare Plato's theory of a just state in *The Republic* with that of John Rawls in *'A Theory of Justice'*.

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 2102 Ethics III

Date: Thursday 4th June 2009

Time: 10.30 – 11.30

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Choose **one** of the following questions and answer fully.

1. MacIntyre argues that today our moral language in the Western world is in a state of disorder, evidenced by the kind of disagreement people have on important moral issues like abortion, war and health services. Discuss the explanation he gives for this state of affairs.
2. “To be good, and to do what is right, one’s will must be in accordance with the moral law.” Discuss.
3. What kind of right is the right of life? Can it be overridden by utilitarian considerations? Give reasons for your answer.

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ASSESSMENT TEST: Semester 1, 2008-2009

STUDY UNIT: **PHI 3008 Philosophy of Rhetoric**

DATE: Wednesday 21 January

TIME: 10.30 – 11.30

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer One question.

1. Offer a rhetorical reading of any ‘cultural artifact’ (advert, movie, novel) of your choice.
2. What does it mean to say that the artifacts of popular culture are rhetorical?
3. Outline and discuss the contents of any **two** philosophical theories on reading texts rhetorically.

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 2107 Aesthetics

Date: Tuesday 2nd June 2009

Time: 9.15 – 10.15

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer one question.

1. “The attempt to define art, even if it does not succeed, may increase our understanding of the art world and its objects.” Discuss.
2. “Applied to art, the word ‘imitation’ tends to take on special meanings.” Discuss.
3. “Expression theories (of art) tend to lose sight of the importance of skill in the arts, and even to reduce the importance of the arts themselves.” Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.
4. “Like expression and imitation theories of art, formalist theories, while calling our attention to an important aspect of works of art, fail to do justice to their variety and complexity by ignoring other equally important features.” Discuss.

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MAY/JUNE 2009 SESSION EXAMINATIONS

PHI 2207 Principles and Perspectives of Science

Date: Tuesday 9th June 2009

Time: 10.30 – 11.30

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer ONE question

1. Karl Popper rejects the view that the method of science is essentially inductive and he proposes falsification instead. Discuss the reasons given for rejecting induction as the proper way to do science and explain what Popper means by falsification.
2. Thomas Kuhn distinguishes between normal science and extraordinary or revolutionary science. Discuss with reference to the different approaches or methods used by scientists in their work.
3. Imre Lakatos presents scientific research programmes as the model of growth in scientific knowledge to “explain and further strengthen Popper’s sophisticated falsification and to present scientific revolutions not as constituting religious conversions but rather as rational progress”. Discuss.
4. Does the 16th and 17th Century scientific revolution concerning the structure of the universe conform to Kuhn’s concept of a paradigm shift?

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
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DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

ASSESSMENT TEST: Semester 1, 2008-2009
STUDY UNIT: **PHI 3009 Philosophy of Culture**
DATE: Tuesday 20 January
TIME: 10.30 – 11.30

Please remember to write your name and surname as well as the question number on each foolscap.

Answer One question.

1. In what sense are fashion and clothing cultural phenomena?
2. Discuss the various communicative functions of fashion and clothing?
3. Semiology is a useful tool to account for different levels of meaning in fashion. Discuss.
4. “Fashion is an underestimated social force. It functions effectively not only as an economic colossus but also to engineer social practices. This interplay of consumer tastes, social habits and personal identity was noted by Thorstein Veblen in his nineteenth-century analysis of the new American bourgeoisie and leisure classes.” Discuss.