

ADVANCED LEVEL SAMPLE PAPER SYLLABUS 2016

SUBJECT: AM PHILOSOPHY
PAPER: 2
DATE:
TIME: 3 hours

BIG QUESTIONS IN EUROPEAN THOUGHT

Directions to Candidates

Answer question 1 from Section A and any two questions from Section B

Section A: Compulsory Question

1. “Yet apart from everything I have just listed, how do I know that there is not something else which does not allow even the slightest occasion for doubt? Is there not a God, or whatever I may call him, who puts into me the thoughts I am now having? But why do I think this, since I myself may perhaps be the author of these thoughts? In that case am I not, at least, something? But I have just said that I have no senses and no body. This is the sticking point: what follows from this? Am I not so bound up with a body and with senses that I cannot exist without them? But I have convinced myself that there is absolutely nothing in the world, no sky, no earth, no minds, no bodies. Does it now follow that I too do not exist?

No: if I convinced myself of something then I certainly existed. But there is a deceiver of supreme power and cunning who is deliberately and constantly deceiving me. In that case I too undoubtedly exist, if he is deceiving me; and let him deceive me as much as he can, he will never bring it about that I am nothing so long as I think that I am something. So after considering everything very thoroughly, I must finally conclude that this proposition, I am, I exist, is necessarily true whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind.”

Descartes, *Meditation II*.

- a. Explain briefly the difference between scepticism and Descartes’ method of doubt. (6 marks).
- b. The idea of a ‘deceiver’ has been established by Descartes in the *First Meditation* [“But there is a deceiver of supreme power and cunning who is deliberately and constantly deceiving me.”]
Explain briefly the role of the ‘deceiver’ in Descartes’ method of doubt. (6 marks)
- c. Descartes concludes that he can exist even without a body. What are the implications/assumptions of such a conclusion? Answer with reference to Descartes’ dualism. (6 marks).

- d. In the given extract, Descartes concludes that “*I am, I exist*, is necessarily true whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind.” What role does this conclusion play in Descartes’ *Meditations*? (12 marks)

Section B: Choose any two questions

- (2) What does it mean to say that a person has both physical and mental characteristics?
- (3) How did Classical and Medieval philosophers address the problem of evil and its implications?
- (4) In *A Treatise of Human Nature*, David Hume states that philosophy should be built on the "solid foundation ... of experience and observation". Discuss.
- (5) "The ground rules for good dialogue can be seen as the basic rules of democracy." Discuss.
- (6) Discuss Plato’s contribution to the concept of ‘self’.