



Cambridge International Examinations
Cambridge Pre-U Certificate

SUBJECT

9774/03

Paper 3 Topics and Key Texts in Philosophy and Theology 2

May/June 2016

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 50

Published

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Choose **one** of Topics 1 to 3. Answer **two** questions. You must answer **both** parts of the question in Section A and **one** question from Section B for the Topic you have chosen. You should divide your time equally between the questions you attempt.

Topic 1 Philosophy of Mind

Answer Question 1 **and** either Question 2 **or** Question 3.

Section A

[Extract from **John Searle**: *Minds, Brains & Science*: 31–32]

- 1 (a) Explain the meaning of this passage in terms of Searle's thought – experiment of the Chinese room.

In essence, Searle is insisting that the mind is not simply about syntax – it has semantics: minds have more than a formal structure – they have content. Searle's Chinese Room thought-experiment relates to Turing's claim that were a machine to exhibit intelligent behaviour indistinguishable from that of a human being, then we would have to conclude that the machine could think. In the CR case, the presumption is that Artificial Intelligence research has succeeded in building a computer that behaves as if it understands Chinese: it is successful in that it convinces a Chinese speaker that he/she is speaking to another Chinese-speaking human. But does the machine literally understand Chinese, or does it merely simulate that ability? The latter would merely be a weak AI claim, whereas the former would be a strong AI claim. Searle then thinks of himself inside the CR, manually receiving and posting Chinese characters. Despite the fact that Searle speaks no Chinese, he could still replicate the computer's achievement of convincing a Chinese-speaker that he does. Since his actions replicate those of the machine, from the fact that *he* does not understand Chinese we must infer that the computer doesn't understand it either. The computer lacks intentionality and semantic content, so cannot be understood to be thinking, and if it does not think, it does not have a mind; therefore strong AI is mistaken.

[10]

- (b) Examine critically Searle's rejection of the view of cognitive science that the mind works like a computer.

Searle's discussion of cognitive science is in MBS ch.3, and follows on from his discussion of whether or not computers can think. His attack on cognitive science is perceived as an attack on computationalism, and he accepts that cognitive science can give insights into the workings of the brain, and does not require that computers can think. The attractiveness of CS is that it embraces the latest technology to characterise the mind, which has been done since time immemorial: with the ancient Greeks it was compared to catapults; with the invention of telephones, it was compared to a telephone switchboard, and so on; so since we can design computers and information processing systems that obey rules, and since humans appear to obey rules also, it is easy to conclude that the mind works like a computer. An example of rule-compliance is Chomsky's assertion that the mind contains innate rules for language to which the various human languages correspond. Searle insists, however, that computers do not follow rules in the way that humans do: rules for humans have a semantic content, and the mere description on rule-like activity does not require that humans are following a rule. The fact that the human eye cannot see beyond the visible light spectrum does not show that a rule is being followed, merely that that human sight is limited. Again, clocks appear to follow rules, nevertheless not all clocks work in the same way: mechanical clocks have a fundamentally different construction from water clocks. Cognitive science cannot describe fully how a brain becomes a mind. There are many routes that critical analysis might take. Searle's analysis might be supported by his general concerns about consciousness and intentionality; further, the prevalence of mathematics as a central human tool for understanding the universe might also support Seale's conclusions, since even here, human mathematicians appear to know a lot more about mathematics than is computable. Against this, for example, it has become increasingly clear that chess is ultimately algorithmic/rule based, since the most advanced computers are beginning to beat the best human chess players on a regular basis. In other words, Searle needs to remember that AI is in its infancy, and future developments may well (as he admits) show that the assumptions of the CR program are true. In particular, functionalist approaches to the theory of mind incorporate several such ideas.

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Where mental states are identified by a functional role, they are said to be multiply realised in various systems, including perhaps non-biological systems such as computers. Computer systems are physical devices with an electronic substratum that perform computations on inputs to produce outputs, so brains might comparably be described as physical devices with a neural substratum that perform computations on inputs to produce behaviours.

[15]

2 'States and processes of the mind are identical to states and processes of the brain.' Discuss.

The identity theory holds that for every mental state there is a brain-state with which it is identical. For example, every pain event is held to be identical with C-fibres firing. In support of MBIT, mental events do appear to be localised in specific areas of the brain. People who suffer localised brain damage also suffer localised damage to the mind, and the most natural explanation of localization is that the mind *is* the brain. Many would take instant objection to this, since to say that two terms mean exactly the same thing means that all predicates of one apply equally to the other. If, in J.J.C. Smart's version of MBIT, every pain event is identical with C-fibres firing, then 'pain' and 'C-fibre firing' have mutually identical predicates; but the experience of pain is private, whereas C-fibre firing is public, so the two terms can hardly be identical.

The theory is propounded variously in a type-type and a token-token format. Support from the former comes from successful scientific reductions, e.g. that lightning consists of electrical discharges and water consists of H₂O, on the basis of which MBIT philosophers suggested that a given type of mental state will be found to be identical with a given type of brain state. So, just as water is always identical with H₂O, pains will always be found to be identical with C-fibres firing. Type-identity theory is problematic in that it restricts mental states to humans, whereas it seems likely that different biological systems could develop mentality. Mental states do appear to be multiply realisable, so that, for example, in people with severe localised brain damage, other parts of the brain can and do take over the functions of the damaged sections, and for this reason, many espouse a token-token version of MBIT in which a token of one type can be identical with tokens of different types, e.g. in the way that 'wristwatch', 'Big Ben' and 'digital clock' are different tokens of the type 'timepiece' that nevertheless have identity in having some construction that tells the time.

Candidates might argue that MBIT is a plausible alternative to dualism, since the correlation between mental states and brain states is obvious to a point, e.g. in that damage to the brain causes damage to the mind. Some might argue that MBIT falls foul of Leibniz's law of the identity of indiscernibles; that it cannot account for the intentionality of mental states; that individuals do seem to have privileged access to their own mental states; that materialism is unsatisfactory in general, and so on. The fact that the theory is constantly evolving to deal with such objections suggests that some version of MBIT might turn out to be true, at some point.

[25]

3 'There is no such thing as personal *identity*.' Evaluate this claim.

The primary problem of personal identity (PI) is a metaphysical question concerning the establishment of sufficient criteria for judging that 'x' is the 'same person' over periods of time, not least the 'same person' in a putative *post mortem state* as the individual who died. There are a number of theories of PI based on some combination of factors such as body, personality, memory and soul, so that various theories maintain that PI consists in:

- numerical identity of the soul
- or numerical identity of the body
- or of the brain
- or psychological continuity.

According to Cartesian dualism, for example, the first of these is correct because persons are identical with their incorporeal soul, and not with their physical bodies. For those who hold this view, then, numerical identity of the body is neither a logically necessary nor a sufficient condition of PI. This view is not popular, since there are obvious problems with Cartesian dualism, such as interactionism / the problem of counting souls, and so on. It is true, however, that Swinburne still offers a robust theory of the soul. Numerical

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identity of the body is equally problematic, and this can be illustrated, for example, through Sidney Shoemaker's case of Brown and Robinson. This does not rule out numerical identity of the brain as the criterion of PI, but the latter comes under fire from fission thought experiments such as those devised by Wiggins & Parfit, where the two individuals that result from brain fission now occupy unique spatio-temporal locations, so cannot be identical. Following upon the difficulties experienced by these efforts, Parfit concludes that *identity* is not what matters, so survival *post mortem* (for example) is based on psychological *continuity*.

To deal with the 'no such thing' element of the question, candidates might look, for example, at Hume's view that the mind is a kind of theatre in which there appear bundles of different perceptions, one succeeding the other with great rapidity, brought together by the relations of causation, contiguity, and resemblance that obtain among the perceptions. Some interpret Hume to be advocating a reductionist / eliminative view of the self, perhaps along the lines of the Buddhist view of *anatta*.

[25]

Topic 2 Ethics

Answer Question 4 **and** either Question 5 **or** Question 6

Section A

Extract from JS Mill: Utilitarianism Chapter 2

4 (a) **With reference to this passage, explore what J S Mill means by 'happiness'.** (10)

Students may go outside of the passage to consider the distinction Mill makes between higher and lower pleasures and his general thoughts on what constitutes a 'happy' life. Full marks are available for commentary which is limited to the passage.

E.G. For Mill, happiness is not an unattainable goal but a positive reality that people can strive for. It is easier at times, since happiness can be thought to be "chimerical", an impossible thing to attain as it appears to be illusory, to ensure that the opposite, unhappiness, is limited or mitigated. By removing the roots and causes of unhappiness people can attain happiness. Happiness is not being in a constant state of euphoria, as then people would not value how they feel as there would be no contrast. Also that condition would not be beneficial for human beings. Exalted pleasures last only a short time, but real deep happiness can be a continual state in which people feel that the balance of their lives is positive. The nature of the happiness will vary at times, depending on the overall situation, but the moments of pain will be comparatively few and the moments when life can be positively valued will be many. Mill draws the distinction between different types of pleasures. The higher pleasures which are more mentally-based give depth and meaning to an individual's life and are worth possessing as much as possible. Purely physical pleasures add only a limited quality to life, no matter how great the quantity of these pleasures. A few high quality pleasures can override a large number of lower quality pleasures. A happy person will be totally satisfied with the balance of their life as they will not be desiring things that have only limited, passing value. The greatest happiness is not just a personal happiness but a universal happiness. The individual cannot be content unless there is true justice and a sharing of happiness for all people, with a removal of as many causes of unhappiness or suffering as possible.

(b) **Evaluate the claim that happiness can be the sole 'rational purpose of human life and action'.** (15)

High grade candidates will consider whether happiness can be the 'sole' purpose as well as evaluate whether it might be considered a 'rational' purpose. Candidates who do not include alternative views will be awarded no higher than level 5. Candidates may include some of the following points:

Getting what one wants might mean preventing others from getting what they want. It seems difficult for everyone to be happy. If morality is defined in terms of happiness then not everyone can be moral, which seems wrong.

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People do not know for certain what will make them happy. Many think being rich will make them happy but it often does not. Which actions promote happiness in a rational being is an insoluble problem. Something so elusive cannot be a rational principle for action.

Seeking happiness directly as a rational goal will not result in true satisfaction. Doing the moral thing does not always promote happiness as it often means doing something you do not desire to do.

Making somebody happy is not the same as making them good.

Grounding morality in happiness is an attempt to ground it in empirical principles, but many would argue that moral principles need to be universal and necessary.

Christian ethics could be summed up in the words 'Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect'. Some people think that divine contemplation is the ultimate happiness and this will come from being as perfect as God, if this is possible

Other views might include:

Kant argues that happiness is not an ideal of reason but of imagination which means that it cannot be a rational principle. He argues that the true vocation of reason is to produce a good will. The rational principle of morality is the categorical imperative. The quest for happiness reduces morality to hypothetical imperatives. Kant argues that rationality does not require that we denounce happiness but that when our duty conflicts with happiness that we take no account of happiness. It is rational to choose to be honest, even if this produces unhappiness. The moral life will produce a sense of self satisfaction, and one may reasonably expect happiness from it. Happiness is a weak duty which it is easy to obey since all desire it.

The natural law tradition claims that virtue and happiness coincide with virtue the object of rational desire. Situation Ethics finds the rational motive for action in agape and God.

Section B

5 Discuss whether Natural Law ethics are to be discovered or invented. (25)

A range of responses are anticipated but high level grades can only be awarded to those who demonstrate in depth knowledge of Natural Law and its application. A balanced argument is not required but acknowledgement of both views is needed for higher levels. Candidates may fruitfully use a practical ethics topic in the service of this question; does Natural Law discover a rule with respect to abortion or invent one?; does Natural Law discover human rights, or invent them? Students may conclude that they are neither discovered nor invented but *decided*. Others may argue that it does not matter either way, etc. An attempt to argue with the question itself would usually indicate a high level script.

E.g. Aquinas would argue that human beings seek their self-fulfilment by following the eternal law. These are principles that only God knows fully but which humans can see reflected in the laws that govern the universe. The divine law which is revealed in the Bible reflects this eternal law. Natural Law reflects both the divine and eternal law. Even if people do not believe in God, they can understand or discover what it means to be human by using their reason. In this way, natural law is to be discovered. If people invent the rules, then they might be going against God's guidance. They should allow their reason to decide what the right thing to do is, but this needs support from the Bible. Anything that does enable a human's dignity to be supported, especially through the principles of preserving life, reproducing, education, living peacefully with others and worshipping God, must be good. This only requires an open mind to work it out. Others might say that natural law is helping people fulfil themselves by finding out what is inside themselves, what they have to do to be a full person, to find their purpose in life. For them this might mean inventing an ethical position as other positions are not allowing this individual to be true to their own nature. Reason has to be used, but reason could start with a tabula rasa rather than a list of precepts or expectations. The individual's own personality helps them start with a discovery about what might be done but it has to invent new guidelines to fit in with a specific situation.

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- 6 With reference to ethical theories you have studied analyse whether all killing ought to be thought of as ‘murder’. (25)

Candidates have numerous options open to them and scripts will be marked according to the levels of response. Close reference to war is anticipated, but candidates are able to include abortion, the disposal of embryos, euthanasia, vivisection and killing animals for human use, whether for food or resources. High level scripts will demonstrate confident application of ethical frameworks and be able to identify the critical issues.

E.g. “Murder” can be defined as the unlawful, premeditated removal of another person’s life. While, many people would quote the Biblical teaching “Do not kill”, the nature of the act and the intention behind the act can totally change the interpretation of the deed. Many people would argue that, for a person whose life has been blighted by severe physical deterioration, especially when there are also initial signs of mental deterioration, acceding to the victim’s request for euthanasia might be the most loving thing to do. This would fit in with the approach of Situation Ethics and some might argue that it would fit into Jesus’ teaching to love one another. The removal of life cannot be easy, even in this situation, for the person who has to perform the deed, but the fact that they do it unwillingly, at the request of someone they love, strongly suggests that it is not murder. Natural law ethics demands that life be preserved, yet even Thomas Aquinas accepted that in a situation of war life has to be taken. If a country is defending itself against an unjust attack, the soldiers have to kill to protect their neighbours. The death of one person might save the lives of many. For this reason many Christians would have supported the murder of Hitler during the Second World War. The utilitarian theme of ‘the greatest good for the greatest number’ could be quoted here to justify the act. While Kantian ethics might suggest that taking life is the wrong thing to do, that people should always perform actions out of duty, some people might question whether there is a higher duty that overrides the basic command of not killing. To automatically refer to the removal of life as “murder” is to pass judgement without a close examination of the facts. The word “murder” ought to be restricted specifically to the cases where there is premeditation or no justification for the removal of the life

Topic 3 Old Testament: Prophecy

Answer Question 7 and Either Question 8 or Question 9

Section A

Malachi 1: 6b–14

- 7 (a) With reference to this passage, discuss the historical background to the book of Malachi. (10)

Candidates may present some factual material as background but this should link in with supporting references from the text.

E.g. The returned exiles under the leadership of their governor Zerubbabel finished the temple in 516 BC. In 458 BC the priest Ezra and several thousand more Jews returned. Artaxerxes king of Persia encouraged Ezra to reconstitute the temple worship (Ezr 7:17) and to make sure the Law of Moses was being obeyed (Ezr 7:25–26). Fourteen years later (444 BC) the same Persian king permitted Nehemiah to return to Jerusalem and rebuild its walls (Ne 6:15). The similarity between the sins denounced in Nehemiah and those denounced in Malachi suggests that the two leaders were contemporaries. Candidates may detail the criticisms straightforwardly and note that during this period, whilst the temple had been rebuilt and sacrifice had resumed, the promises of earlier prophets for a great and glorious vindication of Israel had not happened. Malachi reaffirms this promise and in this passage blames the priests for God’s disfavour. The exile had been caused by the people turning away from true worship and commitment to God. They had been punished but were now being given a new chance to rebuild the relationship with God. This relationship should be expressed through them showing respect for God in all ways. The priests should be the leaders setting an example and giving a pure offering to show to all nations how Holy God is (v 11). However, the poor quality of the offerings (v.13-14) and the lack of commitment to God and to his worship, mean that they are throwing away the opportunity that God has given them. Unlike the other prophets, Malachi does not have to deal with apostasy and immorality, but apathy.

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7 (b) ‘The prophets absolutely rejected the need for sacrifice and the cult.’ Evaluate this claim. (15)

The debate is rich and students may draw on many examples to substantiate an argument. Candidates should be aware of the distinct role of the professional prophets who held a close relationship with the shrine to which they belonged or the Temple. The language of *nabi'* is often associated with a different class of wandering prophets, who usually worked outside of the shrine and insisted on Yahweh's unique authority in the cult. The writing prophets often challenged the cult and were largely ignored or rejected during their lifetimes.

E.g. Among the Jewish people, human sacrifice was nearly always rejected in any situation, though it did occasionally happen (Micah 6:6–8). The story of Abraham and Isaac showed how God rejected human sacrifice but he did want obedience. The theme of obeying God rather than offering formalised worship is recurrent in the prophets e.g. Amos 5:21–22. Animal sacrifice was generally accepted, under certain circumstances. In the 8th century the prophets stressed that social justice and true worship and knowledge of God were more important than sacrifice. It was not so much the cult that was rejected as the abuses that were included in the worship. People “mistakenly” offered sacrifice to other gods, under the pretence of offering worship to God (e.g. Hos 13:1–2). When people went to the sanctuaries they sinned, even though they believed they were offering proper sacrifice (Amos 4:4). The fact that Isaiah's call vision took place during temple worship suggests that the prophets saw a valid role for true cultic worship (Is 6:1–6). This worship has to be more than formalities, e.g. Is 1:11. Worship made the people become complacent. They often presumed that because the routine was correct, they were at one with God. The prophets, particularly Jeremiah, stressed that this was not the case (Jer 7). Many early prophets were connected with the sanctuaries and they would have supported the cult. Even the psalms refer to offering pure sacrifice (Ps 51:19) and many of the visions of the restored Jerusalem show that pure sacrifice will be offered to God which will be mainly having a close relationship with God by doing his will, but often there are overtones of pure offerings included in the words used (e.g. Is 12:1–6). Animal sacrifice continued throughout the time of the Temple, which suggests that the words of the prophets against the cults in the pre-exilic period were not seen as a total rejection of animal sacrifice.

8 Discuss the nature and meaning of symbolic acts in pre-exilic prophecy. (25)

Candidates can address this topic either by discussing the nature and meaning of symbolic acts in general, exemplifying points with references from a range of prophets, or by a more detailed study of symbolic acts used by at least two of the pre-exilic prophets. There must be evaluation which may include an examination of the impact and usefulness of the acts.

E.g. Many of the pre-exilic prophets used symbolic acts to enhance their message. The dramatic makes a greater impact on the people the message is directed to than a simple verbal proclamation. One of the biggest issues for the onlookers was to decide if the meaning was important or if the symbolic act was simply a sign that the so-called prophet had gone mad. Jeremiah hiding his loin cloth (Jer 13) is not an action that would normally be done by a sane person. Hosea marrying a whore (Hos 1 and 3) would not inspire many good-living Jews to respect the person of Hosea. While the prophets themselves are convinced that the acts are inspired by God or done in obedience to God, often the meaning of the acts is obscured, even to the prophets. Later reflection brings out the central message, like Hosea realising how the actions of his wife and the nature of their marriage reflect the adulterous attitude of the Jewish people in the sight of God. Jeremiah understands the meaning of the hidden loincloth after it has been recovered, good for nothing. Sometimes the acts are performed by other people, e.g. Jeremiah seeing the potter at the wheel (Jer 18) and the prophet sees the action as a good representation of the relationship between God and the people. Sometimes, the prophet deliberately performed an action and uses the action to reinforce the message from God, e.g. Jeremiah breaking the jug (Jer 19). False prophets also used symbolic actions to get a message over, e.g. Hananiah's removal of the yoke from Jeremiah to symbolise the ending of the oppression of the people (Jer 28). How much impact a symbolic act made on the audience would depend on how open their minds were and how much they trusted that the prophet was inspired by God. For instance, the actions that Jeremiah is told to perform in Jer 16 will only have an impact on those who recognise that the actions have a meaning and who ask the prophet what the message is. Can people be expected to respond to all actions as prophetic messages? Too often people give meaning to actions when there is no meaning intended (as parodied in “The Life of Brian”) or the message can get distorted. For the message to be clear there has to be a verbal explanation. However, the symbolic actions can have a great impact, especially as a repeat of the action or something similar can remind the audience of the prophet's

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message e.g. a man with a plum-line could remind people of Amos' vision (Am 7:7–9) and its meaning. Sometimes the acts can have more than symbolic value e.g. Elijah's offering on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18) was not just a sign of the power of God but it enabled Elijah to take direct action against the priests of Baal.

OR

9 Examine the nature and value of Jeremiah's confessions. (25)

The confessional material in Jeremiah is a unique type of literature among the prophetic books. Found in 11:18, 12:6, 15:10–21, 17:14–18, 18:18–23, 20:7–18 these passages Jeremiah shares his "soul struggle", his "anguished conversations" with God about his relationship with God, his mission and his misgivings about his call. It is possible that these passages were never meant for public consumption but were part of a private document that might have been edited into the main book of Jeremiah's prophecies. Jeremiah shows himself to be vulnerable. In these passages, Jeremiah expresses his discontent with the message he is to deliver, but also his steadfast commitment to the divine call despite the fact that he had not sought it out. Jeremiah has an inward struggle: he cannot reject God's demands yet he does not feel that he is being fairly treated. He will fulfil God's demands, but the cost is very high. In several of these "confessions," Jeremiah prays that the Lord will avenge his persecutors (e.g. Jer 12.3) and he places his confidence in God to avenge him (Jer 20:12).

Jeremiah's "confessions" are a type of individual [lament](#). Such laments are found elsewhere in the psalms and the [book of Job](#). Like Job, Jeremiah curses the day of his birth (Jer. 20.14–18 and Job 3.3–10). Likewise, Jeremiah's exclamation "For I hear the whispering of many: Terror is all around!" (Jer. 20.10) matches Psalm 31.13 exactly. However, Jeremiah's laments are made unique by his insistence that he has been called by Yahweh to deliver his messages. These laments, monologues, dialogues and disputes with God provide a unique look at the prophet's inner struggle with faith, persecution, and human suffering. In some ways Jeremiah's situation reflect what was happening to the Jewish people: they were being persecuted and ridiculed by the nations. These passages could be seen as an example of how to cope with any form of persecution: trust God in all things and look for vindication and vengeance from God rather than trying to get it yourself.

Value: Jeremiah was called against his will and was denied a normal life. The value may be seen in their uniqueness and distinctiveness. They give insight into the prayer life of a prophet. We see Jeremiah the man battle with the demands that are put upon Jeremiah the prophet. The fact that Jeremiah's relationship with God is so strong that he can speak in these accusatory tones to God yet know that God will accept his pleas shows that Jeremiah has great trust, a trust that all people are called to emulate. They may be seen as an inspiration to a believer who falls on tough times, or for their contribution to spiritual truth and knowledge. The fact that, even as editorial inclusions in another document, the language is so genuine means that the reader can feel the depths of Jeremiah's despair – these are not artificial pieces. Their significance may be evaluated alongside the work of the prophet, his symbolic actions and his overall impact. Their significance may be evaluated in relation to other prophetic works.