

PhD entrance Test – Philosophy

Answer any **TWO** questions from Section I (40 marks each) and any **ONE** question from Section II (20 Marks each)

Section I Answer any two of the following. 40 marks each.

1. The Ugandan dictator Idi Amin once said “Freedom of speech I can guarantee; freedom *after* speech I cannot.” Critically evaluate this statement.
2. Can machines think? Does it matter?
3. “**Man can do what he wills but he cannot will what he wills.**” (Schopenhauer).

Explain this distinction between

(1) your being able to will to do something and doing it

and

(2) your not being able to will what you actually will to do.

Your answer need not so much be an explanation of what exactly Schopenhauer meant by this remark, as it should be an explanation of what you understand the **different senses of will in (1) and (2)** to be. The explanation should be given in terms of some concrete example, so that it becomes quite clear what you mean.

4. If, according to Descartes, your mind is immaterial and your body material, how is it possible for your **immaterial mental intention** to raise your arm to be the **cause** of your **material arm** rising? Can the immaterial mind really be causally efficacious in bringing about material or bodily change at all?

Answer this question by way of discussing the famous, or infamous, problem of **mind-body causal interactionism** in Descartes.

5. Much as “beauty lies in the eye of the beholder” (as the idiom goes), so also, as it is held in a certain circle of moral philosophy, **the goodness of a person or**

the rightness of an action consists, not in the person or action, but in the attitude of the speaker who speaks of a good person or a right action.

Discuss this meta-ethical theory of moral concepts and critically examine the viability of such a theory for moral philosophy.

6. Is Philosophy the same as or different from *Darshan shastra*, and why so?
7. How do you see the possibility of metaphysics today - after Kant, Heidegger and Carnap?
8. The sign above Plato's Academy entrance read: "Let no-one ignorant of geometry enter here". The physicist Eugene Wigner wrote an article titled "The Unreasonable Effectiveness of Mathematics in the Natural Sciences". Discuss the relationship between mathematics, natural sciences and philosophy.
9. If induction were not possible *a la* Hume, what would be the nature and scope of human knowledge? Discuss.
10. In the light of the ontological proof for the existence of God, discuss whether existence is a predicate.

Section II. Answer any one of the following. 20 Marks each.

1. State and justify your position with regard to Noam Chomsky's claim that humans innately possess a system of universal grammar.
2. Can knowledge be equated with justified true belief? Briefly explain.
3. What is a paradox? Discuss with reference to any two paradoxes.

What is the relationship between punishment and sovereignty?