

PHIL 310A Question Paper 1

Due Oct 2, 2015

A. FACTUAL QUESTIONS: ANSWER ALL 5 QUESTIONS

Allocate less than 10 minutes for this section. Answers should ordinarily require only a word or a few words, rarely a full sentence. There may be several possible formulations for each answer.

1. Give an example of an “argument from mythological authority” in the speech of Phaedrus in Plato’s *Symposium*.
2. Is Socrates, as portrayed in Plato’s *Phaedo*, a materialist?
3. Who is the prophetess who advises Socrates in the Art of Love in Plato's *Symposium*? (She outlines the ascent to the Form of Beauty).
4. Give an example of bias favouring one gender or culture in the speech of Pausanias in Plato’s *Symposium*.
5. Which speaker in the *Symposium* is a celebrated comic poet, and which speaker is a celebrated tragic poet?

B. PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS: SELECT 2 QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

(DO NOT ANSWER ALL!)

Allocate approximately 30-60 minutes per answer. A typical question will require a short essay of 1-3 paragraphs (400-600 words) to answer effectively, but use your judgement. Good answers will display a clear thesis, a structured argument, and creativity; they will also explicitly reference evidence from the relevant primary sources (include direct citations, e.g. *Symposium* 223D, where they are relevant to your answer). Particularly strong answers might compare multiple texts or ideas, and demonstrate facility for critical thought by evaluating alternative viewpoints or counterarguments.

6. Why might Plato “distance” himself from the narration of the *Symposium* by framing the story within third- or fourth-hand reportage? Briefly give some textual examples of this distancing, and explain its possible function.
7. Is Socrates’ critique of craft experts or professional experts (*Apology* 22C-E) a good criticism of Erixymachus’ speech in the *Symposium*? Why, or why not?
8. What do you take to be Plato’s critique of either (a) conformity with majority views or (b) adoption of authority as guides to action? Do you agree? Why or why not?
9. Describe some salient features of Socrates’ dialectical method of question-and-answer (elenchus) in “early” dialogues such as the *Laches* (see syllabus for our readings). How does Plato strive to differentiate Socrates’ method from the speeches of sophists?
10. Compare Socrates’ remarks regarding his own “wisdom” in the *Apology* with his claim to *expertise* on love in the *Symposium*. Are the two views consistent or contradictory? If so, how? If not, why not? Briefly support your answer from primary texts.

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