**Study Questions Exam 2**

**Ancient Philosophy**

**Dr. L. McHenry**

1. What is Theaetetus’s 2nd definition of knowledge? How does Socrates relate this definition to both Protagoras’ thesis that man is the measure and Heraclitus’ doctrine of reality that all is flux?
2. Why does Socrates think knowledge is impossible with the Heraclitean view?
3. How does Socrates challenge Protagoras’ relativism in the *Theaetetus*? Explain his arguments? Do you think that Socrates’ defeated Protagoras? Why or why not?
4. Explain the major differences between relativism and absolutism. Are there any persuasive arguments for relativism?
5. What is Thrasymachus' view of justice? How does Socrates reply to Thrasymachus? Does he defeat Thrasymachus' view in both its original form and in its modification?
6. How does Glaucon modify Thrasymachus' argument to make a stronger case for the thesis? Does Socrates defeat this position?
7. How does Socrates/Plato begin to construct a definition for justice in the *Republic*? What is the strategy?
8. Explain the Tripartite Structure of the State and the individual soul. How does this theory relate to the definition of justice?
9. Compare Plato's definition of justice with the view advanced by Thrasymachus and Glaucon. Does Plato give any reason why his theory defeats that of Thrasymachus and Glaucon?
10. Discuss Thrasymachus’ definition of justice in connection to Protagoras’ thesis: man is the measure.
11. Explain any historical relevance of Athenian history in the 5th century B.C., to the definition of justice advanced by Plato in the *Republic*.
12. From the *Phaedo* and the *Republic*, explain Plato's Theory of Forms. What are Forms and why does he think that they are the ultimate objects of inquiry? Explain his metaphysics of dualistic idealism. Are there any reasons why we should believe the Forms exist?
13. Relate the following Pre-Socratic philosophers -- Heraclitus, Pythagoras, and Parmenides – to Plato’s theory of the Divided Line.
14. Who are the philosopher-kings? Why should we believe that these individuals are in any better position to govern than non-philosophers? What education does Plato prescribe for the philosopher-kings?
15. What is Karl Popper's criticism of Plato's Utopian vision in the *Republic*? Does Popper see a difference between Socrates' and Plato's political philosophy? Do you think that Popper is correct?
16. What is Aristotle's criticism of Plato's Theory of Forms? What arguments does he advance to refute Plato? In your view, is Aristotle successful? Why?
17. Explain Aristotle's methodology and his linguistic approach to ontology. What is the underlying assumption in Aristotle's method? Does this method appear to be plausible? Why or why not?
18. What is Aristotle's conception of reality? From the *Categories* and the *Metaphysics,* explain his concept of substance. What is the most important characteristic of substance?
19. Does our conceptual scheme revealed in ordinary language determine how we see reality, or does reality determine how our conceptual scheme is developed in our language? Which is Aristotle's view? Is he correct? Why or why not?
20. What is the difference between essential and accidental properties? Which of the following are essential properties of a human being--having blond hair, being a female, being six foot, four inches tall, being an animal, being passive, being rational?
21. In one of Aristotle's characterizations of substance, he says that substance is what is capable of independent existence. Qualities are incapable of independent existence. Does this view make sense? Which of the following would count as independently existing substances for Aristotle--human beings, trees, cars, houses, planets, solar systems, ocean waves, clouds, rivers, rocks, grains of sand, rays of light, molecules, atoms, electrons?
22. What is Aristotle's teleological conception of reality? From the *Physics* explain the four causes. Is this view of the purposeful nature of substance plausible? Why or why not?
23. Explain the different types of souls in Aristotle's psychology and relate to his ethics. How does Aristotle's teleology function in his ethics?
24. What is the ultimate goal for human beings? Explain what Aristotle means by 'the good life.' Explain the affinities and contrasts with Plato's view. In your view, is Aristotle right? Why?
25. What is *eudaimonia* or happiness for Aristotle? How is this different from happiness conceived as hedonism?