

Philosophy exam 2: Question one

The pre Socratics Introduced a variety of new thinking into the world of Philosophy. These new ideas were a Naturalistic view (compared the old way of super natural explanations such as Gods) , literal thinking as opposed to Mythopoetic thinking, and the greatest of the new ideas, the concept of a unified theory under which to classify all phenomena.

The pre-Socratics sought to solve many issues and conundrums expressed, encountered, or ignored by Previous thinkers. These issues included the idea of a ‘basic stuff’, a substance that reality can be said to be “made” out of, an issue brought up originally by the materialists. Other issues included the paradoxes of one versus many, permanence versus change (how can something change and retain its identity). Ultimately, the basic assumption put forth was that Reality must be distinct from appearance, and must have a quality of permanence. Many pre-Socratic philosophers put forth their own ideas about how to solve these issues. Several suggestions about everything originating from a single element were put forth, such as Thales and his vote for water, and Anaximenes and his vote for air. Other groups such as the Sophists, ignored the problems altogether and simply focused on persuasion and disregarded metaphysical principles and questions.

So far, so good. BUT you need to include more detail on the thinking of the presocratics, for example, that the Milesians were materialists, that the Eleatics were not, what the difference was, discuss Pythagorus, Parmenides, Heraclitus, Atomic theory, the Epistemology of Xenophanes, show how each dealt with the issues and how each improved on the previous thinkers (why, for example, Atomic theory was the best theory prior to Plato for answering all the questions, but fails nonetheless (show why). You also need to say how this reductionistic naturalistic logical thinking done by all these thinkers and the logical requirements for something to be, set the conditions for all subsequent Western thought in religion, philosophy and Science. (if you want you might say something about how this is OK if we know the limits of such thought but that we typically don't and therefore habitually mistake what can be accomplished with it.)

Grade: INCOMPLETE

Comment [DP1]: For Sophists, reality just is appearance

Question 3

Plato 's Theory of forms and Aristotle's hylomorphism incorporated and rejected many facets of previous thinking. Although they each attempted to answer the same issues as the other Pre-Socratics, the methods put forward by these theories were drastically different and contrary to popular belief at the time. Both of them topple materialism (and Atomism for that matter) because a purely materialistic view of the world compromises all ideas of Morality. Relativism is rendered moot because it makes all arguments equally invalid. Their theories did, however, incorporate previous ideas of requirements for being and basic reality, as well as elaborating on ideas of multiplicity

Comment [DP2]: Need to mention the following, what value they had, and how they improved on previous thinking: The use and capacity for induction (Nous) from particulars to general categories in generating knowledge of reality, the nature of statements and truth, syllogistic logic by which we can move from statements about substances and categories to other substances and categories, potential versus actual by which we can explain identity through change, the four causes, practical versus theoretical reason, eudaimonia, the unmoved Mover, how Aristotle moves beyond Plato, yet remains very Platonic, etc.

INCOMPLETE

Comment [DP3]: This is all correct. You obviously can think well about these issues. You need to do more with it.