NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
Historia de la Filosofía Antigua I

Idioma: EN

EXAM STATEMENT:

The exam consists of two sections. Both must be answered: 1) One question to be chosen and answered from the following three syllabus topics. 2) An open topic, chosen from the course content, for which the student must take into account the guidelines provided by the teaching team on the ÁGORA platform. Each section is worth 1 to 5 points, totaling 10 points. However, to pass the exam, both parts must be answered in a balanced manner. IMPORTANT: The self-formulated question and the development topic chosen from the three proposed by the teaching team cannot belong to the same content block of the syllabus.

Question 1:
A) Philosophy in Magna Greece: Pythagoras.
B) Plato's concept of Being and The World of Ideas.
C) Aristotle: Politics.

Question 2: An open topic, chosen from the course content, for which the student must take into account the guidelines provided by the teaching team on the ÁGORA platform.

Question 1

Plato's concept of Being and The World of Ideas.

STUDENT RESPONSE:

Option B: Plato's concept of Being and The World of Ideas.

Plato's concept of Being, as articulated in his dialogues, constitutes a fundamental ontological framework distinguishing the realm of reality from the transient world of sensory experience. Central to this is the Theory of Forms (or Ideas), which posits that true Being exists in an intelligible, immutable, and perfect realm beyond the physical world. The Forms represent the essential, eternal essences of things—such as Beauty, Justice, or Equality—which are the ultimate realities and the objects of genuine knowledge. In contrast, the world of becoming, governed by sensory perception, is characterized by flux, imperfection, and illusion, rendering its objects merely imperfect copies or shadows of the Forms. This dichotomy is explicitly developed in works like the *Republic* (Book V), where Plato employs the allegory of the cave to illustrate the philosopher's ascent from the visible to the intelligible realm.

Plato's account of Being emerges from his critique of Heraclitean flux and Parmenidean staticity, synthesizing both through a dynamic metaphysics. The Forms serve as the ground of Being, providing the necessary stability for intelligible knowledge. Crucially, the *Phaedo* establishes the immortality of the soul through its participation in the Forms, while the *Timaeus* introduces the Demiurge as the divine craftsman who shapes the sensible world according to the eternal Forms. This structure resolves the tension between Parmenides' assertion of Being's unity and Heraclitus' emphasis on change, positing that Being is constituted by the eternal Forms, whose intelligible nature enables philosophical knowledge.

The World of Ideas functions as the ontological foundation, where Being is defined by participation in the Forms. Unlike Democritean atoms or Empedoclean elements, the Forms are non-physical, non-sensible entities that constitute the true reality. This concept underpins Plato's epistemology: knowledge (*episteme*) is attained through reason, not sensory perception, as the Forms are apprehended by the intellect. The *Republic*'s tripartite soul model and the *Phaedrus*'s theory of recollection further demonstrate how the soul's innate connection to the Forms enables philosophical insight. However, Plato's system faces internal challenges, such as the *Parmenides*'s critique of the Forms' multiplicity and the *Sophist*'s questioning of the distinction between Being and non-Being, highlighting tensions between his ontological commitment and logical coherence. Ultimately, Plato's Being is a hierarchical structure where the Good (or the Form of the Good) serves as the ultimate cause and standard of all reality, ensuring that the World of Ideas remains the sole source of true Being and intelligible order.

Question 2

An open topic, chosen from the course content, for which the student must take into account the guidelines provided by the teaching team on the ÁGORA platform.

STUDENT RESPONSE:

Heráclito's concept of the unity of opposites, articulated in his fragmentary texts, constitutes a foundational yet paradoxical framework for understanding dynamic monism in early Greek philosophy. The philosopher posits that conflict and contradiction are not merely coexisting forces but the very mechanisms generating cosmic order—expressed most famously in the assertion that "war is the father of all things." This thesis, while seemingly counterintuitive, establishes a dialectical process where opposing elements (e.g., hot/cold, life/death, day/night) perpetually interact to sustain the Logos, the universal rational principle governing reality.

Heráclito's central argument, as evidenced in fragments 50 and 107, rejects static dualisms by asserting that opposites are not absolute but interdependent phases within a unified flux: "Oppositions are the same, and all things are both opposites and the same." This dynamic unity challenges Parmenidean metaphysics by grounding being in perpetual change rather than fixed entities. Crucially, the Logos functions as both the underlying structure of this flux and the means of discerning it, as stated in fragment 100: "The Logos is the reason of all things."

The philosophical significance lies in Heráclito's rejection of atomistic or pluralistic models. Unlike Democritus' indivisible atoms or Empedocles' four elements, Heráclito conceives reality as a continuous, self-sustaining process where identity emerges through contradiction. His critique of human perception—highlighted in fragment 20, "The way up and down is the same"—underscores the limitations of sensory experience in grasping the Logos. This necessitates a "soul that is trained to be silent" (fragment 5), emphasizing the role of intellectual contemplation over empirical observation.

Heráclito's legacy profoundly influenced later thinkers. Plato's Theory of Forms, while diverging in its static idealism, inherited the notion of an underlying order; Aristotle critiqued Heráclito's flux in *Metaphysics* but acknowledged his insight into causality through "contraries" (Book IV). In the Neoplatonic tradition, Plotinus synthesized Heráclitean dynamism with mystical unity, while modern interpretations by thinkers like Hegel and Heidegger reinterpreted the "struggle of opposites" as the essence of dialectical progression.

This analysis demonstrates how Heráclito's monism, despite its apparent contradictions, provides a crucial precursor to both Western metaphysics and critical theory, emphasizing that stability arises not from stasis but from the ceaseless interplay of opposites—a principle that remains relevant in contemporary discussions of complexity and emergence.