

BA EXAMINATION 2009

for Internal Students

This paper is also taken by Combined Studies Students

PHILOSOPHY

Optional Subject (r): Marxism

Friday, 1 May 2009: 10am – 1pm

Answer THREE questions. Avoid overlap in your answers.

1. EITHER (a) ‘The young Marx saw more deeply into the philosophical and political problems of his age than any of his contemporaries.’ Discuss.

OR (b) Does Marx provide any insight into the nature of a non-alienated society?
2. In what sense, if any, is the young Marx a materialist?
3. How plausibly can it be argued that Marx’s discussion of history and capitalist society does not depend in any way on moral concepts?
4. EITHER (a) Explain the ‘transformation problem’ in Marxist economics. What is its significance?

OR (b) For Marx, is economic exploitation a relation between classes or between individuals?
5. EITHER (a) Is Marx’s analysis of the wage rate in capitalism (i) an application of the labour theory of value; or (ii) a problem *for* the labour theory of value; or both (i) and (ii); or neither (i) nor (ii)?

OR (b) What does Marx mean by ‘commodity fetishism’? Does commodity fetishism involve a mistake?
6. EITHER (a) Why did Marx say that under communism work will become ‘life’s prime want’? Is there anything to be said for this view?

OR (b) According to Marx, ‘the criticism of religion is the presupposition of all criticism’. How do you understand this? Did Marx adhere to this project throughout his work?

TURN OVER

7. 'No rational member of the proletariat would ever engage in revolutionary struggle.' Discuss.
8. EITHER (a) Does historical materialism need to appeal to functional explanation? If not, how can historical materialism otherwise be made consistent? If so, is this a strength or a weakness?
- OR (b) Explain Marx's distinction between the forces of production and the relations of production. Are there good reasons for believing in the primacy of the forces?
9. Is it plausible to say that communism will see a 'withering away of the state'?
10. EITHER (a) Critically examine Lukács' account of reification.
- OR (b) Does *History and Class Consciousness* 'out-Hegel Hegel'?
11. Is Marxism best understood as a science or as a critical theory?
12. What should Marxists say about art?
13. EITHER (a) 'Marxism is a failed synthesis of Hegel and Darwin.' Discuss.
- OR (b) How are we to combine Marx's analysis of ideology with his statement that 'The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas'?

END OF PAPER