

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

BA EXAMINATION

for Internal Students

This Paper is also taken by Combined Studies Students

PHILOSOPHY

Optional Subject (o): The Philosophy of Social Science

Answer THREE questions

1. Would a relativistic account of knowledge necessarily result in a rejection of any criterion of rationality?
2. How, if at all, can we understand a society with a form of life different from ours?
3. 'The backward state of the Moral Sciences can only be remedied by applying to them the methods of the Physical Sciences, duly extended and generalised' (Mill). Discuss.
4. In what sense, if any, are social objects ideal types?
5. What, if anything, is the difference between 'explaining' and 'understanding' in social science?
6. Does historical explanation typically involve laws?
7. 'If there were no individual persons, there could be no societies, states, cultures, or tribes'. Does this entail the truth of individualism in the social sciences?
8. EITHER (a) Is functional explanation a kind of causal explanation?  
  
OR (b) Darwin's theory of natural selection has shown that functional explanation is scientifically legitimate. Does it follow that functional explanations are legitimate in the social sciences?

9. EITHER (a) Could a person's having a certain reason explain why he did something without its being true that whenever any person had that sort of reason, he did that same thing?

OR (b) Is intentional explanation a kind of causal explanation?

10. What evidence might one cite for the presence of some specific rule in a certain society?

11. Is it always rational to maximise one's personal utility?

12. Is value-freedom a desirable and/or attainable goal for the social sciences?

END OF PAPER