

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

BA EXAMINATION

for Internal Students

This paper is also taken by Combined Studies Students

PHILOSOPHY

3(b) Political Philosophy

Answer THREE questions, including at least ONE from EACH section. Candidates taking Optional Paper (p) (Marxism) may NOT attempt question 8, marked with an asterisk.

SECTION A

1. EITHER (a) Does Plato succeed in establishing that the best form of state is not a democratic one?

OR (b) Discuss Plato's use of the craft analogy in his exploration of the nature of political authority. Is it his most important analogy?

2. EITHER (a) Aristotle claims that the state exists 'by nature'. How plausible does he make this claim?

OR (b) How central to Aristotle's account of the good polity is his notion of the good citizen?

3. EITHER (a) Evaluate Hobbes' claim that the sovereign power must be absolute and undivided.

OR (b) Does Hobbes show that it is necessary, and also that it is possible, for persons in the state of nature to create a sovereign power?

4. EITHER (a) How, according to Locke, does a government come to acquire legitimate political authority over those whom it governs? Is his account sound?

OR (b) 'Locke fails to show how the "enough and as good" proviso can be satisfied once land is as scarce as it was in his day. Thus his account of the origin of private property rights fails'. Discuss.

5. EITHER (a) Does Rousseau succeed in showing that all citizens of a properly constituted state are subject to 'The General Will'?

OR (b) Explain and assess Rousseau's claim that '[P]ower can be delegated, but the will cannot'.

6. How plausible is Kant's claim that the social contract 'is in fact merely an idea of reason, which nonetheless has undoubted practical reality'?

7. EITHER (a) How, according to Hegel, are state and civil society related? Are they so related?

OR (b) How far does Hegel's theory of history depend upon his metaphysics?

8.* EITHER (a) What is the best way of construing the interaction between forces and relations of production in the Marxist theory of history?

OR (b) Critically examine Marx's theory of exploitation.

9. EITHER (a) Is Mill's Liberty Principle compatible with his utilitarianism?

OR (b) Does Mill provide the materials for an answer to the question of whether the production and sale of pornography should be prohibited?

SECTION B

10. EITHER (a) Sketch Rawls' argument for his claim that his two principles of justice would be chosen in the original position. Is his argument convincing?

OR (b) Is there any response to the criticism that hypothetical contracts lack binding force?

11. What is political (as opposed to comprehensive) liberalism?

12. EITHER (a) How cogent are Nozick's criticisms of 'patterned' theories of justice?

OR (b) Sketch and evaluate Nozick's argument for the minimal state.

13. 'Regulating the free market is a mistake from the point of view both of economic efficiency and of individual liberty'. Discuss.

14. EITHER (a) What is libertarian self-ownership? Can it be reconciled with equality?

OR (b) Under what conditions, if any, can one justly come to acquire private ownership over previously unowned worldly resources?

15. EITHER (a) Is equality of resources (including physical and mental capacities as well as worldly goods) or equality of welfare a more defensible conception of equality?

OR (b) How does a strictly egalitarian theory of distributive justice differ from one which gives priority to the worse off? Which theory is more defensible?

16. Is there a cogent distinction between 'positive' and 'negative' liberty?

17. 'Rights protect fundamental interests'. 'Rights protect fundamental choices'. How, in detail, do these views differ? Which is superior?

18. EITHER (a) It is widely thought that governments which emerge from democratic processes enjoy a degree of legitimacy that other governments cannot match. If this is so, does it rule out civil disobedience in a democratic society?

OR (b) 'No dictator or ruling elite, however benevolent, can match the experience and expertise of the people as a whole'. Can democracy be justified on such a basis?

19. Does the distinction between 'justice' and 'care' illuminate any important issue in political philosophy?

20. Do the obligations of distributive justice stop at national borders?

21. What, if anything, justifies our supposed obligation to obey the state?

END OF PAPER