

# UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

## BA EXAMINATION

for Internal Students

This paper is also taken by Combined Studies Students

## PHILOSOPHY

### 3. (b) Political Philosophy

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Answer THREE questions, including at least ONE from EACH section. Candidates taking optional paper (q) (Marxism) may NOT attempt Question 7, marked with an asterisk.

### SECTION A

1. EITHER (a) How compelling are Plato's arguments against the conceptions of

justice which prevailed in his day? How compelling is his own

alternative conception?

OR (b) What arguments might Plato bring to bear to require the

Guardians to rule?

2. EITHER (a) How should we understand Aristotle's claim that men are

political animals? How significant is this?

OR (b) Aristotle claims that the slave exists 'by nature'. How plausible

does he make this claim?

3. EITHER (a) 'If humans cannot cooperate within the state of nature, then they cannot cooperate to leave the state of nature either.' Is this a serious objection to Hobbes's political theory?

OR (b) 'Hobbes has nothing plausible to say within political theory because he has nothing plausible to say about justice.' Discuss.

4. EITHER (a) Is it possible to justify the legitimacy of highly illiberal political societies by appealing to Lockean principles of consent?

OR (b) What sort of restrictions upon acquisition of unowned land does Locke's proviso that one leave enough and as good for others impose? Are such restrictions justified?

5. EITHER (a) 'The problem is to find a form of association which will defend

and protect with the whole common force the person and goods of each associate, and in which each, while uniting himself with all, may still obey himself alone, and remain as free as before.'

Does Rousseau succeed in solving the problem?

OR (b) '[I]t is by no means a light undertaking [...] to form a true idea of a state which no longer exists, perhaps never did exist, and

probably never will exist; and of which it is, nevertheless,  
necessary to have true ideas, in order to form a proper judgement  
of our present state.' What is the significance of Rousseau's  
remark?

6. EITHER (a) 'The History of the world is none other than the progress of the  
consciousness of Freedom.' What does Hegel mean by this claim?

Is it plausible?

OR (b) Why does Hegel argue that each Estate must be related to the State  
in a different way? Would everyone enjoy adequate  
representation within Hegel's ideal state?

7.\* EITHER (a) How far would it solve the problem of alienation, which Marx  
claims to have identified, if all commodities were produced

within workers' co-operatives in order to be sold on the market?

OR (b) 'The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class  
struggle.' Explain and evaluate this statement.

8. EITHER (a) What defence does Mill offer on behalf of the principle that the  
state may penalise behaviour only for the purpose of preventing  
harm to others? Is this defence sound?

OR (b) Can Mill's harm principle (Liberty Principle) be rendered  
consistent with his claim that the state may impose criminal

liability on some who do not come to the assistance of others?

## **SECTION B**

9. EITHER (a) Clearly outline the main ideas of Rawls' argument for Justice as

Fairness and examine them critically.

OR (b) If we never were and never will be in the Original Position, does

it serve any useful purpose in political philosophy?

10. EITHER (a) How compelling are communitarian criticisms of *A Theory of*

*Justice*? Does political (as opposed to comprehensive) liberalism

provide an adequate response to such criticisms?

OR (b) 'Perfectionism combines the insights of both communitarianism

and liberalism, while avoiding their defects.' Discuss.

11. EITHER (a) What are Nozick's arguments against the welfare state? Are they

convincing?

OR (b) Does Nozick refute the anarchist?

12. Can libertarian self-ownership be reconciled with distributive equality? If so, how? If not, which of the two values should prevail over the other?

13. Is 'positive liberty' any improvement on 'negative liberty'?

14. Can feminist demands for political equality and for recognition of difference be

reconciled?

15. What are rights? In what sense, if any, are some of them natural?

16. 'It is important that everyone should have enough. But it is perverse to think that everyone should have the same.' Discuss.

17. EITHER (a) What, if anything, ought to be equalised?

OR (b) What is the 'expensive tastes' objection to welfare egalitarianism?

Does a welfare egalitarian have any good response to this objection?

18. Is justice a matter of mutual advantage?

19. EITHER (a) What circumstances, if any, would justify civil disobedience in a democratic society?

OR (b) 'No apparent paradox of democracy will ever convince us that we should abandon democracy in favour of something else.' Discuss.

20. EITHER (a) 'In the free market the price of every factor of production—including labour—reflects its contribution to production.

Therefore in the free market exploitation is impossible.' Discuss.

OR (b) Can utilitarian arguments be used to defend the free market?

**END OF PAPER**