

**BA EXAMINATION 2002**

for Internal Students

This paper is also taken by Combined Studies Students

**PHILOSOPHY**3. (b) Political Philosophy

Wednesday, 8 May 2002: 10.00 – 1.00

Answer THREE questions, including at least ONE from EACH SECTION. Candidates taking optional paper (p) Marxism may NOT attempt question 7, marked with an asterisk. Avoid overlap in your answers.

**SECTION A**

1. EITHER (a) How convincing is Plato's opposition to democracy in the *Republic*?  
OR (b) Does Socrates establish that he has an obligation to obey the law, even if this means his death?
2. EITHER (a) What is the best form of constitution, according to Aristotle? How strong are the arguments he presents in its favour?  
OR (b) What does Aristotle mean by saying that the state exists 'by nature'?
3. EITHER (a) Does Hobbes have a defensible theory of sovereignty?  
OR (b) Does Hobbes show that people in a state of nature will adopt the social contract?
4. EITHER (a) How is Locke's argument that we tacitly consent to the state best interpreted? How convincing is it?  
OR (b) "'There is no longer enough and as good for others.'" Therefore on a Lockean theory of property all current property rights are illegitimate.' Discuss.
5. EITHER (a) What problem is the idea of the General Will intended to solve?  
OR (b) 'To obey a law we have imposed on ourselves is freedom.' Is

Rousseau right?

**TURN OVER**

6. EITHER (a) Explain Hegel's concept of *Geist*. What role does it play in his political philosophy?
- OR (b) Can Hegel's political philosophy be justly criticised for failing to respect the constraints of methodological individualism?
- \*7. EITHER (a) What does it mean to say that under capitalism workers suffer from 'alienated labour'?
- OR (b) What is Marx's theory of historical materialism? Is this theory sound?
8. EITHER (a) Is Mill's defence of liberty consistent with his adoption of utilitarianism?
- OR (b) Does Mill show that 'the legal subordination of one sex to the other is wrong in itself'?

**SECTION B**

9. EITHER (a) Why does Rawls reject utilitarianism? How convincing are his arguments?
- OR (b) What role does the Original Position play in Rawls's defence of his two principles of justice?
10. EITHER (a) Does Rawls's political liberalism successfully rebut the most important communitarian criticisms levelled at *A Theory of Justice*?
- OR (b) Can the dispute between liberals and communitarians be accurately represented as a dispute about the nature of the self?
11. EITHER (a) 'Perfectionism combines the defects of both communitarianism and liberalism.' Discuss.
- OR (b) Critically discuss the strongest criticism(s) feminists have made of liberalism.
12. EITHER (a) 'In a libertarian society, some people might have no right to

food. No such society could possibly be just.' Discuss.

OR (b) Is it true that 'patterns destroy liberty'?

13. What, in your view, is the best defence of democracy? Is it convincing?

14. EITHER (a) Does the principle of fairness adequately explain how we come to have political obligations?

OR (b) Can there be political obligation in modern Western democratic states?

**TURN OVER**

15. Are there any natural rights?

16. EITHER (a) Is it possible to provide good arguments in favour of equality?

OR (b) Does equality require us to neutralise the effects of luck on distribution?

17. Is justice a convention?

18. EITHER (a) 'There are some things that should not be bought and sold.' Discuss.

OR (b) Do considerations of liberty provide a decisive reason to favour the free market over all known alternatives?

19. 'If justice is reason in impartial form, no one can determine what social and political arrangements count as just; for no one knows what reason is, and no one knows what impartiality is either.' Discuss.

20. Is an 'exercise' concept of liberty more persuasive than an 'opportunity' concept of liberty?

**END OF PAPER**