

University of London

EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

For The Following Qualifications:–

B.A. B.Sc. B.Sc.(Econ)

Philosophy B11: Political Philosophy

COURSE CODE : PHILB011

UNIT VALUE : 1.00

DATE : 10–MAY–05

TIME : 10.00

TIME ALLOWED : 3 Hours

B11 POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Answer Three Questions. Avoid overlap in answers.

1. What is the view that rights are side constraints? Why are such side constraints thought by some to be irrational? Can they be justified?
2. 'An outcome is just if it was arrived at by a series of just steps from a just starting point. It is therefore inevitable that inequality is just.' Discuss.
3. Under what conditions, according to Nozick, can one come to acquire rights of private property over unowned land in a State of Nature? Is Nozick's account sound?
4. Is it unjust for the state to raise money to compensate the victims of injustice by taxing other individuals who neither committed nor benefited from the injustice?
5. What is the original position? Are parties in the original position motivated by self-interest or by altruism? What information is available to parties in the original position when they choose principles of justice? Is the original position a sound procedure for choosing principles of justice?
6. How, and how convincingly, does Rawls argue that parties in the original position would find it rational to choose his first principle of justice and to insist on its priority over his second principle?
7. Would it be rational to choose the difference principle rather than average utilitarianism in the original position? Would it be rational to choose the difference principle rather than a guaranteed social minimum which meets basic needs?
8. 'For the average citizen, political participation in the form of voting or joining mass demonstrations is pointless, since it's so unlikely that he or she will make any difference.' Discuss.
9. What is a moral obligation to obey the law? How does such an obligation of obedience differ from a moral obligation to do something that the law happens to command? How does it differ from an absolute (exceptionless) moral obligation to obey the law? What is the difference between the outweighing of such an obligation and its elimination?
10. Are we obliged to obey the laws of the state because we have offered our consent?
11. Can an obligation to obey the laws of the state be justified by means of analogy to an obligation to obey the commands of one's parents or one's benefactor?
12. What is the Principle of Fairness? Does it provide good grounds for an obligation to obey the law?
13. EITHER:
 - (a) Does Plato's craft analogy illuminate any issue in political philosophy?OR:
 - (b) Explain and assess Plato's account of social justice in the *Republic*.

END OF PAPER