

PhD Entrance Examination/ December 3, 2019

Answer either Part I (Philosophy) OR
Part II (Science and Technology Studies)

PART I

PHILOSOPHY

Please answer any two questions from below:

1. "Consciousness is always consciousness of.....". Do you agree? Discuss.
2. Discuss the difficulties in conflating the categories of legality and legitimacy. Elaborate on the (normative and epistemic) moves that are generally offered towards law's attempts to usurp legitimacy.
3. Discuss the work of any one contemporary to rethink social theory.
4. Discuss the problem of the relation between identity and difference as it is discussed in German idealism, in the work of at least ONE of the following thinkers: Hegel, Schelling, Fichte.
5. Consider the following quotation from Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's final speech in the Constituent Assembly on 25 November, 1949:

On the 26th of January 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics we will be recognising the principle of one man one vote and one vote one value. In our social and economic life, we shall, by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man one value. How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions? How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life? If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril.

Discuss the 'contradiction' Dr. Ambedkar had in mind. In just what way does it put 'political democracy' in peril? Do you agree?

6. Consider the following quotation from an article by Prashant DP (The Hindu, 29 August 2017):

Many people describe India's Independence movement as 'India's Freedom Struggle'. After 1947, we may have been 'independent' in the sense that we were free to elect our legislators, but not really free — not in the truest sense of the word... Even today, we fight for our freedom — the freedom to consume the food of our choice, the freedom to express our sexuality, the freedom to be left alone, the freedom to stay 'off the grid'. Large sections of society still struggle for freedom from class oppression. Women everywhere fight for the freedom over their own bodies... Interestingly, even as we individually struggle for one freedom or another, society as a whole looks down upon freedom-seekers. They are seen or portrayed as reprobates, upstarts, troublemakers, freaks, traitors, anti-nationalists or worse. Large sections of our society find these struggles to be amusing at best, and repulsive at worst. "They have the audacity to fight for freedom? Isn't this a free country? Would this sort of nonsense be tolerated in Saudi Arabia? China is so far ahead of us because they don't

believe in this sort of nonsense in the name of Freedom... Did students in America protest the killing the of Osama Bin Laden? Either you love the country you live in, or live in the country that you love!" Pompous Outrage has never had a good track record of exercising logical introspection, nor can it spot the inherent flaws in its own harangues.

What might the author mean by freedom "in the truest sense of the word"? Is there any significance to the claim that "society as a whole looks down upon freedom-seekers"? Do you agree that there are the "inherent flaws" in the "harangues" of "Pompous Outrage"? If so, what are these flaws?

7. Who we are and how we are seen, seem concerns for Foucault and Fanon in the creation of selves and subjects. Analyse.
8. Write brief notes on:
 - a. Political Buddhism and its emergence.
 - b. Buddhism as the "new opium of the people."
 - c. Women in Buddhism
 - d. Buddhas of Bamiyan

PART II

FOR STUDENTS DESIROUS TO WORK IN THE AREA SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Please answer any two questions from below:

1. Do you think we can intelligibly talk about the unity of sciences including both natural and social sciences? Why? Discuss, bringing out the epistemological and ontological issues.
2. What are the various prominent positions available to claim that technology is value laden, and has inherent political traits. Critically elaborate.
3. Write brief notes on
 - a. The problem of Induction
 - b. Existence is not a predicate
 - c. 'Metaphor is the dream-work of Language'
 - d. Essence of technology
4. Discuss the challenges in asserting social (or legal) agency in technical change.