

HUL 258 Social and Political Philosophy

2 hours

Major

Max marks 30

Section I

Answer all questions. Some questions may have multiple answers. All correct answers will get you 2 marks each. Wrong answer will lead to zero mark.

1. Which of the following thinkers subscribe to a fundamental criticism of modern liberal democracy?
  - a) Ambedkar , because democracy will perpetuate capitalism which will be a hindrance for the lower-castes.
  - b) Gandhi , because he thinks of the parliament as a prostitute.
  - c) Marx, because he believes that democracy will perpetuate the interests of the capitalist class.
  - d) Bakunin, because he questions the very foundations of the idea of the state.
  
2. With regard to Savarkar's discussion of the term "Hindu",
  - a) Savarkar never acknowledges the arbitrariness of the connection between a name and what it signifies.
  - b) Settling the debate about what is a Hindu is merely a question of choosing one set of descriptions over another.
  - c) Irrespective of what descriptions fit the name, 'Hindu', Savarkar carefully records the chain of historical causes which led to the wide currency of the term "Hindu".
  - d) Acknowledging the history of the name "Hindu", allows one to subsume Hinduism within the more general notion of Hindutva.
  
3. Michael Oakshott will be opposed to:
  - a) The ideal that is enunciated through the Rawlsian conception of the original position
  - b) The end-goal of total world communism as articulated by the Marxists
  - c) The anarchist's denial of the sanctity of the ideal of private property.
  - d) The anarchist's questioning of all hierarchies including the family.

4. Which of the following is true regarding various views on technology as expressed by Chaplin in the concluding speech in the Great Dictator and by Gandhi in the Hind Swaraj?

- a) Even though Gandhi admonishes Western technology, Gandhi acknowledges that the body is a machine and so is the Charkha.
- b) For Chaplin, railways and aeroplanes need to be celebrated because they inherently afford the interconnection of various peoples and the breaking down of barriers.
- c) Chaplin considers that the body being a machine implies that the body is becoming soul-less.
- d) Chaplin believes that technology is a curse because it has given man far too many means of self-destruction.

5. Which of the following is true about Pratap Bhanu Mehta's essay titled, "Hinduism and Self-Rule"?

- a) Unlike Hegel, PBM does not think that Hindu societies are fundamentally antagonistic to the ideal of the state.
- b) By self-rule, PBM believes that Hindus can rule themselves and they need to decolonize all vestiges of western ideas like parliaments and judiciary.
- c) Insofar as he considers the abstract ideals of a religious philosophy having a relatively indeterminate relation to societal practices, PBM would be opposed to Iqbal's formulation of the ideals of Islam.
- d) PBM stresses on the continuity between Hindu societies and the modern secular state by underlining the division of spiritual and political authority between the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas.

## Section II

Answer any five of the following. Two marks each.

6. What does it mean to think of "to be conservative as a disposition"? Do you think Savarkar is a "conservative"?

7. How does Bakunin distinguish Anarchism from Marxism? ✓

8. What, according to Iqbal, is the metaphysical nature of man? How does he relate this to his ethical and political ideals? Iqbal reads Islam as a social experiment. What does the experiment involve? What does it seek to accomplish?

9. An apocryphal story goes that in 1906, in London, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi dropped in on Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, who was cooking prawns. Savarkar offered Gandhi some prawns, which Gandhi, a staunch vegetarian, refused. Savarkar is believed to have retorted, 'Only a fool would attempt to resist the British without being fortified by animal protein'.

Is this behavior of Savarkar consistent with his views on Hindutva? Why?

10. What idea of secularism does Charles Taylor defend in his paper *Meaning of Secularism*? Is it different from the idea of secularism in Pratap Bhanu Mehta's *Hinduism and Self-rule*?

11. "A man, whilst he is dreaming, believes in his dream; he is undeceived only when he is awakened from his sleep. A man labouring under the bane of civilisation is like a dreaming man." Whose remark is this? How is civilization conceptualized by the thinker who made this remark?

### Section III

This question carries 10 marks.

12. A recent judgment by the Supreme Court of India says:

"All the cinema halls in India play the National Anthem before the feature film starts and all present in the hall are obliged to stand up to show respect to the National Anthem."

According to the Court "The directions are issued for love and respect for the motherland is reflected when shows respect to the National Anthem".

Do you agree with this verdict? Discuss the notions of patriotism, nationalism, nation and citizenship that could possibly justify this verdict. Do you accept these notions? Why? (If you accept these notions, defend them against possible objections. You may accept these notions and still argue that the verdict does not follow from them. You also propose other reasons to justify the verdict.) You are expected to answer using resources from social and political philosophy.