

Political Theory Comprehensive Exam
January 2014

Answer three of the following questions. You must choose one question from each section.

Section I

1. Which is worse, an illiberal democracy or an undemocratic liberal state?
2. What is the most persuasive philosophical foundation for a contemporary theory of human rights?
3. Explain the difference between an illegitimate political regime and an unjust one. Which is more important, legitimacy or justice?

Section II

4. Explain and evaluate Hegel's criticism of rights.
5. Explain and evaluate Aristotle's understanding of citizenship.
6. Explain and evaluate Tocqueville's understanding of religion as a political institution.

Section III

7. Argue for or against the following statement: "Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought."
8. Argue for or against the following statement: "The liberal orthodoxy of the late twentieth century is unraveling. Alasdair MacIntyre and Carl Schmitt provide fundamental texts for engaging in the requisite task of reconstruction."
9. Argue for or against the following statement: "The essence of politics is rulership and...the dominant political passion is the passion to rule or to govern."