

Part II: Essay Question =35% You will be asked to write an essay on one of two topics. All essays will compare thinkers. Plato to Hobbes, Locke to Aristotle, etc. The questions will revolve around a particular theme, virtue for example. Essays should be written in proper format. Introduction, thesis, arguments, and conclusion.

1) While both attack the claims of traditional Christianity, Hobbes and Locke disagree on what we might call the separation of church and state. Explain why Hobbes maintains that the sovereign must oversee religion in the commonwealth and why Locke rejects this view.

Introduction: 100 words

Hobbes: 200 words

Locke: 200 words

Differences: 200 words

Conclusion: 50 words

Hobbes argues in *Leviathan* that religious government and civil government should be one single entity. Hobbes' main reason for asserting that church and state should be one body is because he viewed religion as a threat to the power of the civil government. He asserted that religion can be used either for good or bad, asserting that religion is simply the fear of an invisible power, and it results in the subjugation of its followers. Similarly, Hobbes believed that the fear of invisible powers also leads to belief in superstition, and thus can make its believers irrational. This, Hobbes believed could lead to rebellion, and undermine the government's role in the preservation of society, which is the main function of the government, which comes to exist in order to escape the state of nature. Hobbes describes the state of nature as a war of all against all, and in leaving the state of nature, people agree to give up some of their rights in order for the government to maintain its position in protecting society.

By contrast, in his *Letter Concerning Toleration*, John Locke argues in favour of establishing distinct roles and functions for the church and the state. Furthermore, Locke in his *Second Treatise on Government* argues in favour of a limited government, that is that the role of the government should be to protect the civil interests, which he defines as life, liberty and property, and nothing more. Thus, Locke asserts that since the governing of religion does not fit into any of those categories, the government has no jurisdiction over religion, and writes that the government has no role in saving souls. Locke believed that the state could only coerce the actions of people, not their beliefs, because even if the state wanted to impose its beliefs on everyone, no amount of coercion could force someone to believe in something that they did not. Lastly, Locke asserts that since many princes had differing opinions on religion, it leads to the eventual exclusion of some from heaven simply based on where they were born. Thus, Locke asserts that religion should be a voluntary society, that is, that nobody should be required to practice one faith, rather religion should be a private choice made by each individual.

3) What is the difference between Plato's understanding of justice, and Hobbes'?

Introduction: 100

Plato's understanding of justice: 200

Hobbes' understanding of justice: 200

Contrast: 200

Conclusion: 50

Plato's understanding of justice is presented in the dialogue *Gorgias* through Socrates, who while in conversation with Polus begins with a discussion of power, in which Polus asserts that the ruler of a city has the most power in that city for they can do as they please. Socrates responds to this assertion by presenting an analogy of a sick person taking medicine, saying that they do not wish to be taking medicine, but rather wish to be healthy, and thus are taking the medicine as a means to an end. Similarly, he asserts, rulers do not act as they please, but rather they undertake actions that they believe to be best for the city. Socrates then uses this analogy to explain justice, as he asserts that those that act unjustly do not do so because they want to, but rather as a means to an end. By asserting this, Socrates is in essence asserting that people do not want to do bad, but rather are driven to do bad. From here, he asserts that injustice is to the soul as disease is to the body, one slowly rots the body, while the other rots the soul. This is why Socrates asserts that it is better to be treated unjustly than to act unjustly, and why it is better to act unjustly and be punished rather than to escape punishment. Because over time, the soul will become rotted, and thus will lead to the unjust person becoming unhappy. Socrates asserts that through punishment, one can heal the soul.

Hobbes' understanding of justice follows from his examination of human nature, wherein he presents an extremely pessimistic view of human nature, and as a result, argues that justice can only exist when there is a strong common authority responsible for the creation and execution of laws. To begin, Hobbes believes that to act unjustly means that you have broken a law or covenant that you have previously agreed to, and conversely, to act justly is to perform your duty, with respect to the law or covenant. Furthermore, Hobbes asserts that humans are inherently competitive, distrustful and in pursuit of glory, and they place their self preservation above all else. From this it is clear that Hobbes does not believe that humans are inherently good, or in pursuit of acting in a just manner. It is for this reason that Hobbes believes that justice requires a strong common authority, for it alone will be responsible for the creation of the laws, and the execution of said laws. Thus for Hobbes, the sole motivation to act justly is the fear of the consequences of acting unjustly.

Part III: Essay Question = 35%

Again, you will be asked to write an essay on one of two topics. All essays will compare thinkers. Plato to Hobbes, Locke to Aristotle, etc. Essays should be written in proper format. Introduction, thesis, arguments, and conclusion.

2) While Aristotle provides an account of the “best regime,” he also argues that the power to establish this regime is out of human hands and instead relies on chance. Moderns such as Machiavelli and Hobbes, while offering a less utopian teaching and admitting to potential difficulties, still argue that the power to complete their political projects is within human hands. On what basis do they make this claim and what are the consequences of rejecting the utopian teaching of the ancients?

Hobbes argues that the completion of political projects, more specifically the establishment of a strong common authority is possible because doing so is in the best interests of all people. He asserts that the creation of said government is the result of people wanting to leave the state of nature, which he describes as a war of all against all.

The consequences of Machiavelli and Hobbes’ argument is that if the power to establish the best regime is possible, their citizenry will come to expect it.

3) While both Machiavelli and Hobbes critique classical political philosophy, they do so for different reasons. In your opinion, what is the decisive difference between the teachings of Hobbes and Machiavelli.

Introduction: 100

Machiavelli's critique: 200

Hobbes' critique: 200

Main Difference: 200

Conclusion: 50

Machiavelli, unlike the ancients, was a political realist, that is, rather than write about how a ruler ought to rule, Machiavelli attempts to show how a ruler can rule successfully in the political climate that existed in his time. Furthermore, Machiavelli was a consequentialist, that is, he believed that the actions of a prince should not be judged as either moral or immoral based on the means they use to attain their goals, but rather, their actions should be judged on whether the end they wish to attain is worthwhile, and if they achieve their goal. Thus for Machiavelli, the prince should not concern himself with being just or unjust, good or bad, but instead should concern themselves with maintaining their power at all costs. For Machiavelli, unlike the ancients, the sole purpose of the political ruler is to maintain their power, and thus differs from the ancients view that the job of the ruler ought to be to make his citizens better. Thus, a prince has the right to crush any rebellion in his commonwealth, and by any means necessary, for it poses a threat to his reign, and his sole purpose is to maintain their power. This fact also acts as a deterrent to anyone who wished to rebel, for they would be almost certainly open themselves up to punishment, and would think twice before going against the prince.

Hobbes, similar to Machiavelli, derives his theory based on the experiences he endured during his lifetime, and thus rather than present a utopian government similar to the ancients, presents one that maintains social stability and security. Thus, the sole purpose of the political ruler is to enforce the social contract, that is the contract created by the populace and the government in order to escape the state of nature. Hobbes argues that in order for the populace to accept giving up some rights, the government must ensure their safety and stability, and thus makes it the main function of the government.

The key distinction between Hobbes and Machiavelli is the reasoning behind why people would accept being subjugated under a ruler. Hobbes, for instance, believed that the populace would accept the common authority for the simple reason that they feared the state of nature, and the only way to prevent a return to the state of nature is by accepting the rule of leviathan. Whereas Machiavelli believed that the fear of the prince is what drove people to subjugate themselves, for they feared the consequences that they would open themselves up to if they revolted. Although both governments remain in place through fear, the distinction lies in the fact that for Hobbes it is a fear of the alternative, whereas for Machiavelli it is the fear of the ruler. And both differ from the ancients, who assert that the acceptance of subjugation stems from the fact that the populace believed their leaders would make them better.