



MA (PIS) ENTRANCE EXAMINATION, 2017

M.A. POLITICS

(With Specialization in International Studies)

[Field of Study Code : PISM (201)]

Time Allowed : 3 hours

Maximum Marks : 100

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

- (i) All questions are compulsory.
- (ii) This Question Paper has *two* Sections—Section A and B.
- (iii) Section—A contains three passages, each followed by four questions that test your comprehension of the passage. Please select **any one** of these passages and answer **all four questions below it**. The questions in Section—A are in the multiple choice format. Maximum marks for Section—A are 40.
- (iv) Section—B contains ten questions. Please select any **three** questions to which you are expected to give brief essay-type answers in the space provided in the question paper itself. There are four pages for each answer. Maximum marks for Section—B are 60.

MA (PIS) ENTRANCE EXAMINATION, 2017

M.A. POLITICS

(With Specialization in International Studies)

SUBJECT
(Field of Study/Language)

FIELD OF STUDY CODE

NAME OF THE CANDIDATE
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REGISTRATION NO.

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CENTRE OF EXAMINATION
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DATE

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(Signature of Candidate)

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(Signature of Invigilator)

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(Signature and Seal of Presiding Officer)

SECTION—A

Please attempt all *four* questions from any *one* of the following three passages :

Passage—I

(*From Shahid Amin, Conquest and Community pp. 7-8*)

The notion of syncretism has come in for criticism recently from several scholars working with a variety of historical and ethnographic materials. Tony Stewart in his analysis of the Janus-faced popular Bengali deity Satya Pir, criticizes the votaries of syncretism for taking recourse to a metaphor to underscore their point, comparing the category 'to some other entity that is impermanent, the most popular being organic (such as hybrid or half-breed), alchemical (such as mixture or solution), or construction (bricoleur)'. This metaphorical change, in Stewart's view, 'implies that no syncretic entity is viable in its own right', for it is after all a mixture of two very separate elements—Hindus and Muslims—and hence, in a sense, inherently unstable. Aditya Behl characterizes the Awadh-based Hindvi Sufi poets of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries as 'fully part of the Indian cultural landscape, indigenized yet competing with other groups to articulate their distinct theology'. Muzaffar Alam has analyzed the North Indian Sufis' output and attitudes in the context of their complex relationship to State and society between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries, which was as political, theological and cultural as it was competitive, adversarial and contributory. Such a multilayered relationship, with its own chronology and politics, was moulded firmly by the development of Indo-Islamic concepts such as *Wahdat al-Wujud* (unity of being), tending towards 'the process of religious synthesis and cultural amalgam'. The same seventeenth century Sufi writer, writes Alam, while appreciating certain portions of the Gita that he found 'close to some Quranic verses and hadises as read by proponents of *Wahdat al-Wujud*', could write another text which 'reads like a polemic against Hindu beliefs and traditions'. Faced as we are today with a Manichean clash between Islam and Hinduism in India's medieval past, and a conflictual present in many parts of the world, historians need to fashion newer histories of this encounter.

Answer all *four* of the following questions on the basis of the information given in the passage above. Mark the correct answer with a Tick (✓) :

1. Which of the following statements is true about the intercommunity relation between Hindus and Muslims in medieval India?
 - (a) Medieval Indian culture was a syncretic and stable mix of similar cultural elements.
 - (b) This relation was characterized by simultaneously adversarial and accommodative interaction of two very dissimilar elements.
 - (c) The cultural interaction between Islam and Hinduism was free from theological and cultural competition and rivalry.
 - (d) The cultural encounter between Islam and Hinduism in medieval India was characterized by conflict and rivalry only.

2. According to Muzaffar Alam's analysis of the Sufis' religious practices, which of the following statements is **NOT** correct?
- (a) The Sufis were competitive and adversarial.
 - (b) They were only appreciative of the Hindu religions and theological doctrines.
 - (c) They could be simultaneously appreciative and adversarial towards the Hindu theological doctrines.
 - (d) Their relationship to Indian society was multilayered.
3. Which of the following is **NOT** argued in the passage given above?
- (a) There is an urgent need to fashion new histories that go beyond the notion of syncretism.
 - (b) The notion of syncretism is criticized by historians because it presented a simplified picture of the relations between Hinduism and Islam in the medieval past.
 - (c) The criticisms of the notion of syncretism by historians are not well argued/well founded.
 - (d) There is a link between the histories of the relationship between religious communities and their conflictual present.
4. The three Historians mentioned in the passage, Aditya Behl, Muzaffar Alam and Tony Stewart, are in agreement about which of the following?
- (a) The notion of syncretism provides a complete picture of the relation between the Hindus and the Muslims in the medieval India.
 - (b) The idea of syncretism presents a true picture of inter-community relations in medieval India.
 - (c) Syncretism as a metaphor is a perfect metaphor for Hindu-Muslim relations in medieval India.
 - (d) The notion of syncretism presents a simplified picture of the relations between Hinduism and Islam in the medieval past.

OR

Passage—II

**(From Rajeev Bhargava and Ashok Acharya Ed. Political Theory :
An Introduction, P. 14)**

The term 'political' has multiple meanings. The first goes back to classical Greece and is derived from the word 'polis' which literally means the city, but is better, more properly understood as a place with a common world or even more simply, a community. 'Political', then, pertains to whatever is done within or by the community. More specifically, it refers to *decision making* within and about the community. Decision making itself has a specific connotation. To be political, to live in the polis, as Hannah Arendt tells us, means that everything is to be decided through words and persuasion and not through force and violence. The term 'political' points to

a specific mode of decision making—by words, not force. However, the term 'political' also refers simultaneously to what decisions are about. When we use the term 'political' in this first sense, we speak not merely about life but necessarily about the good life of community. Thus, we may ask, given that we live by a certain conception of good life, who is to be a member of the community and for what reasons, who is to rule, i.e., take fundamental decisions about the community and for what reasons, how resources are to be distributed, to whom and why. In this conception, we can see, the empirical and the normative are completely intermeshed. Nor has the distinction emerged in this context between political and social spheres. Nothing that we now consider to be merely social, i.e., falling between the public-political and the private-household is outside the political. On this classical view then, there is no distinction between social and political theory. Political theory is about how and with what justification decisions are made concerning the good life in a community.

Answer all *four* of the following questions on the basis of the information given in the passage above. Mark the correct answer with a Tick (✓) :

1. Political theory is concerned about
 - (a) what kind of common decisions are taken
 - (b) how common decisions are taken
 - (c) how common decisions are taken and with what justification
 - (d) how decisions are taken by both force and persuasion

2. Which of the following is **NOT** meant by the term 'political' as per the above passage?
 - (a) Political is not only about life but about good life.
 - (b) Political is about what concerns us in common or as part of a community.
 - (c) Political is what falls between the private life of household and the public-political.
 - (d) Political is about taking decision through persuasion and not violence.

3. We call a decision-making process political if
 - (a) decisions are about a conception of life
 - (b) decisions are taken by force
 - (c) decisions are taken according to a conception of good life
 - (d) decisions are private in nature

4. In the conception of the political discussed in the passage given above, the empirical and the normative are completely enmeshed
- (a) Because the distribution of resources of the community and other such fundamental decisions are taken according to a conception of good life
 - (b) Because the conceptions of good life are irrelevant for distribution of community's resources and other such fundamental decisions
 - (c) Because political decisions are taken by both violence and dialogue
 - (d) Because social and political spheres are mixed

OR

Passage—III

(*From Satish Deshpande, Contemporary India : A Sociological View, pp. 1-2*)

There is nothing specially tragic about this fate : it is shared, more or less, by all disciplines unable to promise access to a well-paid job or to social prestige. But it is indeed ironic—in fact, doubly so—that sociology of all disciplines should be confused with common sense.

The first irony is in the pejorative intent of this equation, which implies that common sense is something simple and self-evident. This is a big mistake, for common sense is really quite a profound and powerful phenomenon. In ordinary language, the phrase usually refers to knowledge or skills acquired 'naturally', i.e., without being taught. This may be true in the physical world, where there are some skills that are at least partly untaught or unteachable—like riding a bicycle, for example. But there are no untaught skills in the social world, where society teaches us everything we know, except that, sometimes, it also erases the signs of its teaching. It is precisely this kind of social knowledge—the kind that we are taught to regard as untaught—that sociologists refer to as 'common sense'. Common sense is a vitally important social institution because it supplies the cement that holds up the social structure. That is why, the term has a special status in Sociology, being used as an abbreviation for a whole range of shared, socially inculcated values, attitudes and habits of thought with which we make sense of our world. (To remind the reader of this special usage, I am converting the phrase into a single word.)

Commonsense is pre-judice in the strict sense—it is 'always already' in place and hard at work long before we make any conscious judgements. It preorganizes our perceptions in such a way that a large part of the social world is taken for granted and allowed to sink like an iceberg below the surface of our consciousness, leaving only a small part for our explicit attention. Normal social life would be impossible if we and the others whom we interact with did not share

a common set of assumptions about the world. That is why interacting with those who don't have common sense—small children or mental patients, for example—is often stressful, though it can also be quite refreshing.

Answer all *four* of the following questions on the basis of the information given in the passage above. Mark the correct answer with a Tick (✓) :

1. In the passage above the author is criticizing the idea of common sense according to which
 - (a) common sense refers to the skills acquired through a lot of practice
 - (b) common sense refers to skills learnt 'naturally', i.e., without being taught
 - (c) common sense means without skills
 - (d) common sense is nonsense

2. Why is the concept of common sense important for the discipline of sociology?
 - (a) Because it is like a glue that keeps the social structure together
 - (b) Because it refers to shared values, habits and attitudes with the help of which we make sense of our world
 - (c) Neither (a) nor (b)
 - (d) Both (a) and (b)

3. Why does the author equate commonsense to pre-judice?
 - (a) Because it spoils our relations with others
 - (b) It makes us think negatively about other people
 - (c) Because it occupies that part of our consciousness which is prior to conscious judgements
 - (d) Because it makes our interaction with others stressful

4. Which of the following statements about the relation between common sense and normal social life is correct?
 - (a) Commonsense makes our interactions with others stressful.
 - (b) Commonsense creates a framework of shared common assumptions necessary for normal social life.
 - (c) Normal social life doesn't depend on commonsense.
 - (d) Commonsense comes after our conscious judgements.

SECTION—B

Please answer any *three* of the following questions in the space provided in the question paper itself :

1. Compare and contrast the ideas of nation/community as expressed by Rabindranath Tagore and V. D. Savarkar.
2. What are the distinguishing features of democracy? How does it differ from majoritarianism?
3. What do you understand by global 'climate change'? What are (a) the indicators of climate change, (b) causes for climate change and (c) ways of combating the phenomenon?
4. How do feminist perspectives on international relations reshape the field?
5. Write an essay on the uprising of 1857 in India. What were its causes and consequences?
6. What was the historical background to the rise of Fascism and Nazism in Europe in the 1930s?
7. Discuss the impact of the global financial crisis on the Indian economy.
8. What do you understand by 'fiscal policy'? Discuss the main instruments of fiscal policy.
9. Write a brief essay on Max Weber's argument relating the 'Protestant work ethic' to capitalism.
10. Discuss the role played by caste in political mobilization in India.

