Summer Examinations 2015

SOC300715N

Module Title: Modernity and Beyond
Level: Six
Time Allowed: Two hours

Instructions to students:

- Enter your student number **not** your name on all answer books.
- Answer **two** questions: **one** from **Section A** and **one** from **Section B**.
- All questions are equally weighted.
- Begin each answer in separate answer book; label each answer book clearly with the number of the question you are answering.
- Neither books nor notes may be taken into the examination.
- This is a seen paper. Questions have been distributed to students prior to the examination.

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Section A

Answer one question from Section A.

1. Examine the significance of the concept of ‘surplus value’ for an understanding of Marx’s theory of proletarian revolution.

2. “The worker is related to the product of his labour as to an alien object. The object he produces does not belong to him, and only serves in the long run to increase his poverty” (MARX: 1844 Paris Manuscripts). Explain and discuss.

3. “What is needed if social order is to reign is that the mass of men be contented with their lot” (DURKHEIM: Socialism). How does Durkheim suggest this state of affairs is to be achieved, under conditions of organic solidarity?

4. Explain what Durkheim means by the ‘forced’ division of labour, and show how he uses it in his discussion of class conflict.

5. “For Weber, the driving force of the transition to modernity is the power struggles between pre-modern states, which produced the capitalist form of economy and liberal democracy in the West.” Discuss, making reference in your answer to his views on the limitations of this kind of democracy.

6. What, according to Weber, makes the ‘modern’ state modern?

7. What drew Weber to the study of early Protestant sects in the course of his investigations into the development of capitalism?

8. “One of the most enduring legacies of Barrington Moore’s Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy is the debate which it sparked on how best to make sense of variations in the routes by which countries have become ‘modern.’” (Crow, 1997) Discuss.

9. “The Cold War began with two competing visions of modernity, and ended with the triumph of one over the other.” Discuss.

End of Section A
Section B follows overleaf
Section B

Answer one question from Section B.

10. “Globalization is one of the central facts of our time, but it is sharply contested and open to many interpretations.” (Alexander, 2012)
Do you agree?

11. “Modern society has become a risk society because it is increasingly engaged in debates over self-generated risks in an attempt to manage and to prevent them.” (Beck, 2009)
Critically discuss Beck’s theory of ‘risk society’.

12. Does Ritzer’s McDonaldization thesis effectively challenge the view that we are living in a postmodern and postindustrial world?

13. Is the city the essential hub of modernity, the dynamic centre of innovation, consumption and global connections?

14. How useful is the idea of a transition from ‘modernity’ to ‘postmodernity’ in understanding the social transformations of recent times?

15. Has globalization and the rise of the transnational corporations had a predominantly positive or negative impact on the economies, societies and cultures of the developing world?

16. Examine the claim that the major environmental challenges to modernity are global and therefore only a global response can address them effectively.

17. “The power of automobility is the consequence of its system characteristics. It is a way of life, an entire culture.” (Dennis and Urry, 2009)
Examine the centrality of the car to modernity.

Section B continues overleaf
18. Critically explore the claim that we have entered a new age, characterised by the arrival of the 'Information Society'.

19. Does Fukuyama’s claim that we have reached “the end of history” stand up to scrutiny?