

Elysian Schools

Isaiah Berlin

When this work was published in the *Oxford Magazine* in 1958, it was preceded by this editorial headnote: 'The following manuscript appears to have turned up in the Schools, though it is hard to say exactly how it can have found its way there. There is little evidence to show that this examination was ever conducted here. We have, however, consulted Professor Sir Isaiah Berlin about it, and he considers that, if it was, the candidates were dealt with as fairly as could be expected.' The *Oxford Magazine's* typesetter appears to have corrupted the text at various points, but since the manuscript has not been traced, it has not always been possible to establish what the author wrote. The editor has done his best, but admits that a certain amount of apparent gibberish remains.

		<i>Phil.</i>	<i>Pol.</i>	<i>Econ.</i>
Aquinas, S. T.	Ampleforth & Campion Hall	$\alpha -$	$\alpha\gamma$	γ
Aristotle, Onassis	Winchester & New College	$\alpha \equiv$	$\alpha \equiv$	$\beta\beta\alpha$
	Solid 1st; no imagination; becomes civil servant in Ministry of Education.			
Bentham, J.	Westminster & Queen's	β	$\alpha\beta$	$\beta\alpha$
Scrapes 1st.		(jeune)	(narrow)	
Burke, E.	Wellington & Trinity	$\gamma++/1$	$\alpha\beta/1$	$\gamma-/1$
Filmer, R.	Eton & Trinity	δ	δ	ε
Hegel, G. W. F.	Salem & St Antony's	$\gamma\alpha$	$\delta? \alpha$	β
	Odd historical knowledge. Epigrams.			
Hobbes, T.	Malmesbury GS & Balliol	$\alpha\alpha\gamma$	$\alpha\beta\gamma$	β
	Rusticated for writing nasty, brutish, short article (anonymously) in <i>Oxford Magazine</i> . Viva also short and nasty. Purged γ on Politics, but one examiner morally disturbed, and has nightmares.			
Hume, D.	Edinburgh Academy & Balliol	$\delta\alpha$	$\beta+$	$\alpha\beta$
Kant, I.	Bootham & St Catherine's	$\alpha -$	$\beta++$	$\beta?+$
	Won scholarship to CCC, but wouldn't row in fourth boat, so went to St Cath's instead. Lived in tent in New Bodleian bicycle yard. Viva formal (very).			
Kautsky, K.	Prague & Oriel	β	β	β
	Formal 2nd.			

		<i>Phil.</i>	<i>Pol.</i>	<i>Econ.</i>
Locke, J.	MGS & Lincoln	$\beta+?+$	$\beta+?+$	$\beta+$
Machiavelli, N.	Charterhouse, King's Coll. London & Univ.	$\delta++$	$\alpha-$	γ
Smooth.				
Maistre, J. de	Gordonstoun & Worcester (Besse Scholar)	$\gamma+$	$\gamma\delta$	ε
Hockey blue; not interested in academic work.				
Malthus, T.	King's, Canterbury, & Keble	$\beta\alpha$	$\beta\gamma$ (irrelevance)	$\alpha =$
Marx, K.	St Paul's & Christ Church (cut by Jenny von Westphalen's brother's set)	δ	$\beta?$	$\beta\beta\alpha$
Long viva; intolerable Hegelian patter; no facts, except in Social and Economic History; given 3rd as compromise. Denounces examiners in <i>New Oxford Mail</i> (one issue only). Flies to America and becomes Professor in New School of Social Research; splits off to form New New School, etc.; scandals. Flies to England. Elected to Fellowship at pre-[undecipherable monosyllable] Balliol. Never heard of again.				
Montesquieu, C. S. de	Harrow & Magdalen Irish; <i>invents</i> elegantly and freely.	$\beta+$	$\alpha =$ (Political Institutions) $\gamma-$ (British History)	$\gamma\beta$
Paine, T.	Bradford GS & Queen's Formal viva on best paper (Political Institutions) shows intimate knowledge of American Constitution and French Assembly. Long viva. Utterly fails to come up. 4th.	$\gamma-$	$\beta =$	δ
Pareto, V.	Lausanne & Christ Church Strong on Latin countries, but ill-informed on UK and US. Viva clear and vicious. Philosophers disagree.	δ	$\alpha\gamma$	$\alpha\beta$
Plato, Robin	Eton & Christ Church Birdwatcher; very British. Ploughs (no work).	$\delta\alpha$	δ	ε
Rousseau, J. J.	St Paul's & Wadham	ε	$\varepsilon\alpha$	$\beta\delta$
Socrates, Onassis	Privately ed. & St Catherine's This candidate's scripts were unfortunately lost (by an examiner who shall remain nameless), but a tradition persists among undergraduates that he was given $\alpha++/14$. Viva'ed his Philosophy examiners from 10.30 to 2.30, at which point the search for one last truth was broken off when an examiner collapsed from extreme hunger and thirst and a gnawing doubt about the justification for boards, examinations, subjects, candidates, universities etc.			

		<i>Phil.</i>	<i>Pol.</i>	<i>Econ.</i>	
Sorel, G.	Paris & Ruskin	γ	$\gamma -$	γ	
	Uncooperative. Propounds myths suitable for examiners.		(on Labour movements, $\alpha -$)		
Spengler, O.	St Paul's & St John's	δ	$\beta -$	ε	
	Ploughs after long viva.		(Political Institutions)		
			$\gamma\delta\alpha$		
			(History)		
Tocqueville, A. de	Eton & New College	β	$\beta\alpha$	$\gamma\beta$	
Toynbee, A.	Radley & Merton	δ	$\gamma++$	ω	
	Ploughs.		(Political Institutions)		
			$\gamma?a$		
			(History)		
Veblen, T.	U. of Minnesota & Magdalen	γ	$\beta+$	$\alpha\beta$	
	Rhodes Scholar. Unhappy because rejected by Balliol. Viva short and improper; removed for leering at female examiner. 2nd.		(Political Institutions)		
			$\alpha\gamma$		
			(History)		
{	Webb, S.	MGS & Exeter	γ	$\beta\beta\alpha$	$\beta+?+$
	Potter, B.	Roedean & LMH	$\gamma?+$	$\beta\beta\alpha$	$\beta+?+$

Identical marks on all questions except Morals. After investigation by Proctors it was established that no illicit collusion had occurred. Insisted on using numbered postcards instead of proper books for answers. Punitive vivas; examiners punished instead. Enormous erudition impressed economists; 'a' vivas on both Economic Organization and Economic History. Philosophers not shaken. 3rds.