



January 27, 2003

**FINAL EXAM
CVSP 201**

PART ONE: SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (15%):

Answer **BRIEFLY** (5-7 lines per question); present and explain the meaning and significance of two of the following quotes (Choose **one from part A** and **one from part B**):

A.

1. "In a word, then, like activities produce like dispositions"
2. "It is in the nature of moral qualities that they are destroyed by deficiency and excess"
3. "The pleasure and pain that accompanies people's acts should be taken as a sign of their dispositions."

B.

1. "Nothing is ever created by divine power out of nothing"
2. "The minds of living things and the light fabric of their spirits are neither birthless nor deathless"
3. "Nature... never reduces anything to nothing"

PART TWO: DISCUSSION ESSAY QUESTIONS (65%)

Answer ONE of the following essays (either I or II)

I. Lucretius: "Death is nothing to us"

It can be said that in "On the Nature of the Universe", the Roman Lucretius offers his readers an answer to the ever-recurring Greek question and concern with the puzzle of the constant versus the changing, by presenting and elaborating on his theory of the atoms. More than this however, he aims in his book to dissolve the sources of our most central fears, namely 'Death' and the 'Gods'. In that sense, Lucretius aims at giving us the central elements of the 'good life' as presented by his teacher, Epicurus. Discuss; i.e.

- a. How does Lucretius utilize the theory of atomism to do away with the fear of Death? Elaborate.
- b. Why is eliminating these fears central to living the Epicurean 'good life'? Present the basic principles of the Epicurean 'good life'.
- c. What would Aristotle have to say about a human life lived in accordance with Epicurean principles? Present and elaborate on Aristotle's account of the 'good life'.
- d. **Critically evaluate** the views of the 'good life' as proposed by both Epicurean and Aristotelian ethics; which of the two (if any) do you feel properly presents a view of the 'good life' as you would want to live it? Justify your answer.

- II. **Aristotle:** *"But what is happiness? If we consider what the function of man is, we find that happiness is a virtuous activity of the soul"*
 According to Aristotle, in order to define the 'good life' for humans, one must first identify the unique function inherent to being human. Present and elaborate on Aristotle's view of the 'good life'; **i.e.**
- a. What is the unique function of the human as identified by Aristotle? On what basis does he distinguish this function as the unique one of humans?
 - b. Having established the 'good' as 'happiness', and having identified the function of the human, how does Aristotle then move to proposing his view of how to live the 'good life'? (**hint:** address the two types of virtue).
 - c. Compare and contrast Epicurus'/ Lucretius' view of the 'good life' with that presented by Aristotle.
 - d. **Critically evaluate** the views of the 'good life' as proposed by both Epicurean and Aristotelian ethics; which of the two (if any) do you feel properly presents a view of the 'good life' as you would want to live it? Justify your answer.
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PART THREE: HOMECOMING (20%)

You have just come to the end of your first journey in the world of Civilization Sequence. In that, you may consider yourself as resembling a hero/ heroine who has just returned home at the end of an epic. At your homecoming, you may be asked about the course of your journey and the extent (if any) that this journey has affected and changed your outlook on things and issues of 'common human concern'.

- Present and elaborate your reflection on this journey, touching on issues such as: the characters and/or events that most contributed to your understanding of 'being human'; the themes, questions and concerns; moral proposals aimed at the betterment of life...etc. [mention at least three characters or thinkers you met along your journey]
- Do you feel that today, at the outset of the 21st century we are faced with different and novel concerns, ones that these 'heroes' do not share with us?

Best of luck on this and all your finals