EXAMINATION IN ORIENTAL STUDIES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies

Monday 9 June 2008  13.30 – 16.30

IS.42  ISLAMIC THOUGHT AND INSTITUTIONS

Answer three of the following questions.

All questions carry equal value.

STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS
20 Page Answer Book x 1
Rough Work Pad

You may not start to read the questions printed on the subsequent pages of this question paper until instructed that you may do so by the Invigilator.
Answer three out of the following eight questions.

1. Discuss the concept of Islamic government, with specific reference to the arguments given by the two approaches that deny the feasibility of religious government.

2. Analyse the various dimensions of the ‘governance of the jurist’ (vilayat-i faqih), with emphasis on the arguments given by those supposing it to be an entirely new thesis.

3. Critically discuss the ‘governance of the jurist’ based on an internal and an external justification.

4. Discuss the various interpretations of ‘democracy’ and consider whether or not religious democracy is feasible, concentrating on the main arguments of its critics.

5. Examine the Imamate, one of the credal foundations of Shi’ism, in its esoteric and exoteric dimensions, with emphasis on the threefold function of the Imam.

6. Explain the divisions of the attributes of God and analyse His attributes of power, focusing on the question of whether God has power over everything, free will, unity, speech and wisdom.

7. Examine the views of Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr on any four of the following topics:

   a. An Islamic perspective of political economy.

   b. Economic relationships.

   c. The Islamic theory of distribution.

   d. Distribution of natural wealth.

   e. Distribution of produced wealth.

   f. Directing human nature.

   g. Economic development.

   h. The role of the state.

8. Give a critique of reductive and non-reductive religious pluralism from the Islamic perspective, with its historical background and an emphasis on a plurality of pluralisms.

   END OF PAPER