

QUESTIONS ON HERDER, HEGEL AND HUMBOLDT

Herder Ideas for a Philosophy of the History of Man

1. Identify one of Herder's favourite metaphors for describing human beings?
2. Why is Herder particularly interested in the 'roots' of human beings?
3. What, according to Herder, is responsible for the uniqueness of each culture?
4. What do you understand by the term 'tradition'?
 - a. How, according to Herder, does 'tradition' unify a culture?
 - b. What is the medium by which a cultural tradition is passed on from generation?
5. Why, according to Herder, is exile an unnatural state of affairs? What metaphor does he use to connote this? What metaphor does he use to connote the opposing state of affairs?
6. Is Herder a believer in 'cultural pluralism' or does he believe in a universal human essence?
7. What do you understand by the term 'nationalism'? Why is Herder often described as one of the founders of nationalism?

Hegel Philosophy of History

1. What do you understand by the terms 'metaphysics' and 'philosophy of history'? What is an *idealist* metaphysics?
2. Identify two ways in which the outlook of most nineteenth century thinkers was different from their precursors.
3. By what principle, according to Hegel, is the universe informed?
 - a. What is the German term which Hegel uses to this end?
 - b. In what sense is this principle dynamic and multiform?
 - c. Would you describe Hegel as an empiricist or a rationalist?
4. What German term does Hegel use to describe the consciousness or mind of the individual? How does Hegel conceive of the relationship between the individual and the universal principle discussed above?
5. In what sense is each culture, for Hegel, an 'expressive totality'?
6. What do you understand by the term 'dialectic'? Who was the first philosopher to use this term? What does Hegel mean when he describes history as 'dialectical' in nature?
7. What do you understand by the term 'zeitgeist'?
8. In what ways is Hegel's outlook different from Herder's?

Humboldt On Language

- What does Humboldt mean when he argues that language is the "organ of inner being"?
9. What does Humboldt mean when he describes language as the "formative organ of thought"?
 10. What link does Humboldt envisage between one's language and one's culture?
 11. What does Humboldt mean when he writes that language "possesses an autonomy [which] . . . though inexplicable in its nature . . . is no production of activity, but an involuntary emanation of the spirit, no work of nations but, but a gift fallen to them by their inner destiny"?
 12. What does Humboldt mean when he writes that language is never a finished

- "product (Ergon)" (49) or a fait accompli, but an "activity (Energieia)" (49) a phenomenon always in process?
13. Why, according to Humboldt, is language always in the throes of change?