

Abiturprüfung 2003

ENGLISCH

als Leistungskursfach

– Textteil –

Arbeitszeit: 270 Minuten

Der Prüfling hat e i n e Textaufgabe seiner Wahl
nach den Arbeitsanweisungen des beiliegenden Aufgabenteils zu bearbeiten.

Textaufgabe I

Plato, Parliament and the British fox

"When names, definitions, sights and other sense-impressions are rubbed together and tested amicably by men employing question and answer with no malicious rivalry, suddenly there shines forth understanding." Britain's debate on foxhunting has fallen short of this Platonic¹ ideal. The debate has been
5 more malicious than amicable; and at the end of it neither side appears to understand the other better than it did at the beginning. All the same, contrary to the defeated yelps of some of hunting's shriller advocates, there was nothing undemocratic about the House of Commons' vote to ban hunting with dogs. In a way, the decision was four times more democratic than usual.

10 First, the Labour Party could not have made its intentions any plainer than it did in the manifesto on which it was elected in 1997, which said that the party strongly opposed "the so-called sport" of hunting with hounds and intended to let MPs vote on whether to ban it. Second, if the arguments on both sides have not been tested as amicably as Plato might have wished, they have at
15 least been tested thoroughly. Hunting's supporters and opponents have marshalled the expert opinions and lurid photographs convenient to their respective arguments, and plastered them over newspapers and billboards. Jack Straw² went to the trouble of asking for an impartial investigation of the facts from Lord Burns³, who cogitated mightily and reached the memorable
20 conclusion that the killing of a fox by hounds "seriously compromises the welfare of the fox". Third, when at last the Commons voted this week, the vote was "free", as the government had promised it would be. MPs were allowed to vote in accordance with their individual consciences (or at least their individual

calculations) instead of having to stick to their parties' lines. Fourth, MPs were
25 not presented with a simple yes or no alternative, as they usually are. They could vote either for a total ban, or for regulation of the sport, or for self-regulation, or against all of the above. Mr Straw himself voted to regulate hunting, not to prohibit it. His Tory shadow, Ann Widdecombe, consulted a furry corner of her steely heart and favoured a ban.

30 In short, far from being undemocratic, this week saw a perfect demonstration of democracy. That is the whole trouble. The vote demonstrated perfectly that unless political leaders are careful, democracy seriously compromises the liberty of minorities.

Some of the people who feel passionately about the welfare of the fox
35 simply refuse to acknowledge that to ban foxhunting is to curtail a liberty. But liberty is the pre-eminent issue. Although only a minority of people hunt with dogs in Britain, it is a sizeable minority as well as a vocal one. Of nearly a quarter of a million people who hunt four-legged creatures, some 180,000 are involved in hunting foxes and deer. Of these, many care a good deal about
40 what the Labour Party dismisses as their "so-called sport". Needless to say, the defenders of hunting exaggerate the impact that a ban would have on rural jobs and the rural way of life. But exaggeration is not the same thing as invention. Lord Burns concluded in his report that thousands of people would lose their jobs if hunting were banned. He accepted that in some areas hunting
45 might still be the best way of keeping the fox population under control. He also found that in some communities hunting remained a "significant" cohesive force. Whatever city types think, foxhunting is not just the sadistic pastime of the rich. It is an ancient sport that matters to many people. If politicians make it illegal, they need a good reason.

50 To most MPs, the reason is self-evident: foxhunting, they say, is cruel. Previous governments have legislated to prevent cruelty to animals. Having banned bear-baiting, why not foxhunting?

It is a reasonable question. The answer, unless you are an animal-rights fundamentalist, is that the line must be drawn somewhere. Otherwise, the logical sequel to a ban on foxhunting is a ban on all shooting, fishing, the use of animals in experiments, and the rearing for slaughter of poultry and cattle. Politicians are entitled to move the existing line, but ought at least to aim for some proportionality. In other words, the welfare benefit they confer on the animal ought to be commensurate with the cost they impose on liberty. In this case, it is not. The plain fact is that not even Parliament can make the lot of the fox a happy one. Of the 400,000 or so foxes that die every year, few expire peacefully in bed. About 100,000 are squashed by cars, 80,000 are shot and 30,000 are snared. Only 22,000 are killed in hunts. And Lord Burns gave warning that although hunting with hounds compromised the welfare of the fox, a ban might compromise it further by causing more of them to be killed by shotguns and snares.

What next? The elected majority must have its way. Tony Blair has already said as much to the House of Lords, where the battle now moves. Some defenders of hunting – and some who oppose hunting but defend liberty – hope voters will punish Mr Blair for engineering this outcome. That is wishful thinking. Polls suggest that a ban could be popular. It will have been arrived at by impeccable democratic methods. It just happens to be wrong.

From: *The Economist*, January 20th 2001

Annotations

- 1 Platonic (adj.): here: referring to the philosopher Plato
- 2 Jack Straw: British Home Secretary
- 3 Lord Burns: an eminent former civil servant

Textaufgabe II

From: T. C. Boyle, *The Tortilla Curtain*, 1995

América found him at the bottom of the path, bundled in the twilight like a heap of rags. She'd walked nearly eight miles already, down out of the canyon to the highway along the ocean where she could catch the bus to Venice¹ for a sewing job that never materialized, and then back again, and she was like death on two feet. Two dollars and twenty cents down the drain and nothing to show for it. In the morning, at first light, she'd walked along the Coast Highway, and that made her feel good, made her feel like a girl again – the salt smell, people jogging on the beach, the amazing narrow-shouldered houses of the millionaires growing up like mushrooms out of the sand – but the address the Guatemalan woman had given her was worth nothing. All the way there, all the way out in the alien world, a bad neighborhood, drunks in the street, and the building was boarded up, deserted, no back entrance, no sewing machines, no hard-faced boss to stand over her and watch her sweat at three dollars and thirty-five cents an hour, no nothing. She checked the address twice, three times, and then she turned round to retrace her steps and found that the streets had shuffled themselves in the interim, and she knew she was lost.

By lunchtime, she could taste the panic in the back of her throat. For the first time in four months, for the first time since they'd left the South and her village and everything she knew in the world, she was separated from Cándido. She walked in circles and everything looked strange, even when she'd seen it twice, three times over. She didn't speak the language. Black people

PLEASE TURN OVER

sauntered up the street with plastic grocery bags dangling from their wrists. She stepped in dog excrement. A *gabacho*² sat on the sidewalk with his long
 25 hair and begged for change and the sight of him struck her with unholy terror: if he had to beg in his own country, what chance was there for her? But she held on to her six little silvery coins and finally a woman with the *chilango* accent of Mexico City helped her find the bus.

She had to walk back up the canyon in the bleak light of the declining day
 30 while the cars swished by her in a lethal hissing chain, and in every one a pair of eyes that screamed, *Get out, get out of here and go back where you belong!* – and how long before one of them tore up the dirt in front of her and the police were standing there demanding her papers? She hurried along, head down, shoulders thrust forward, and when the strip of pavement at the
 35 side of the road narrowed to six inches she had to climb over the guardrail and plow³ through the brush.

Sweat stung her eyes. Burrs and thorns and the smooth hard daggers of the
 40 foptails⁴ bit into every step. She couldn't see where she was going. She worried about snakes, spiders, turning her ankle in a ditch. And then the cars began to switch on their lights and she was alone on a terrible howling stage, caught there for everyone to see. Her clothes were soaked through by the time the entrance to the path came into sight, and she ran the last hundred yards, ran for the cover of the brush while the cold beams of light hunted her down, and she had to crouch there in the bushes till her breath came back to her.

45 The shadows deepened. Birds called to one another. *Swish, swish, swish*, the cars shot by, no more than ten feet away. Any one of them could stop, any one. She listened to the cars and to the air rasping through her lips, to the hiss of the tires and the metallic whine of the engines straining against the grade. It went on for a long time, forever, and the sky grew darker. Finally, when she
 50 was sure no one was following her, she started down the path, letting the trees and the shrubs and the warm breath of the night calm her, hungry now –

ravenous – and so thirsty she could drink up the whole streambed, whether Cándido thought the water was safe or not.

At first, the thing in the path wasn't anything to concern her – a shape, a
 55 concert of shades, light and dark – and then it was a rock, a pile of laundry, and finally, a man, her man, sleeping there in the dirt. Her first thought was that he was drunk – he'd got work and he'd been drinking, drinking cold beer and wine while she struggled through the nine circles of Hell – and she felt the rage come up in her. No lunch – she hadn't had a bite since dawn, and then it
 60 was only a burned tortilla and an egg – and nothing to drink even, not so much as a sip of water. What did he think she was? But then she bent and touched him and she knew that she was in the worst trouble of her life.

Annotations

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|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Venice: | town near Los Angeles |
| 2 <i>gabacho</i> : | <i>Spanish</i> : derogatory term for a white American of European descent |
| 3 to plow: | US spelling of "to plough" |
| 4 foptail: | name of a plant; long, dry kind of grass |

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– Aufgabenteil –

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Der Prüfling hat **e i n e** Textaufgabe seiner Wahl zu bearbeiten.

WORKSHEET: Plato, Parliament and the British fox maximum number of points attainable

I. Questions on the text

Read all the questions first, then answer them in the given order.
Use your own words as far as is appropriate.

1. "In a way, the decision was four times more democratic than usual." (I. 9). With what arguments does the writer back up this statement? 20
2. Explain why the writer does not agree with the parliamentary decision to ban foxhunting. Summarize the reasons he gives in lines 30 – 49. 20
3. How does the writer deal with the argument that foxhunting should be banned because it is cruel? Outline his train of thought. 20
4. Examine the function of the third paragraph. How does the writer achieve the intended effect? 10
5. What aspects hinted at in the text substantiate and illustrate the writer's contention that "Britain's debate on foxhunting has fallen short" (II. 3/4) of the Platonic ideal of a strictly rational and fair debate? 10
6. Show how the writer uses tone and language to convey to the reader that he takes some of the issues raised more seriously than others. 20

II. Composition 50

Choose **o n e** of the following topics. Write about 250 to 300 words.

1. "Democracy is the worst form of government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time." (Winston Churchill). Do you agree with this statement?
2. "The credibility of any political system depends on how it deals with minorities." Discuss.
3. Is the liberty of the hunter a higher value than the right to life of the hunted?
4. At a fashion show an animal-rights activist has thrown bags of paint at a model presenting a fur coat.
You have interviewed this activist. Write up the interview for publication in your magazine.

III. Translation

50

Translate the following text into German:

Many Britons wonder what all the fuss is about. Why – with a disintegrating public-transport system, overburdened hospitals, failing schools and a countryside devastated by the ravages of foot-and-mouth disease – is foxhunting the one issue that really excites parliamentary passions?

Could the real motive behind banning the sport be spite, a way of getting at those toffs¹ on horseback, a last gasp of the class war? (And even this sentiment is misplaced, since half the hunt might be shopkeepers and small farmers.) Yves Lecocq² believes so, and says that a ban will convince many Europeans that "British society still hasn't overcome the class struggle from the 19th century." He argues, too, that the whole hunting debate in Britain is linked to the "increasing polarization between an intolerant, even aggressive urban society and a traditional rural society", a split that countries like Spain, Ireland, France and the Nordic nations have escaped because of much closer links between countryside and town.

If foxhunting is to go, shooting could follow, and on cruelty grounds, fishing should go too – though the government has been at pains to say these two sports are safe. There are lots of votes in fishermen and, besides, fishermen don't look down their noses from high horses.

From: *Time*, April 1, 2002

Annotations

- 1 toff: a disapproving way of referring to somebody from a high social class
- 2 Yves Lecocq: secretary-general of the Brussels-based E.U. Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation

WORKSHEET: Boyle, *The Tortilla Curtain*maximum number of
points attainable**I. Questions on the text**

Read all the questions first, then answer them in the given order.

Use your own words as far as is appropriate.

1. Who is América?
Sum up what the reader learns about her origins, her social background and her situation in the US. 20
2. Why does América go to Venice and what does she experience there? 20
3. Examine América's behaviour and feelings on her way "back up the canyon" (l. 29) before she finds her husband. 20
4. Analyse four examples of different ways in which the author uses language to convey América's state of mind in lines 37 to 53. 20
5. Give a detailed description of América's reactions and thoughts in the final paragraph. How does this paragraph relate to the very beginning of the excerpt? 20

II. Composition

50

Choose one of the following topics. Write about 250 to 300 words.

1. Earlier immigrants to the US usually tried to learn English as quickly as possible; today many Hispanics insist on using their mother tongue. Discuss the consequences this new phenomenon might have.
2. Tourists and immigrants – can their experiences in a foreign country be compared?
3. Does literature have the power to change society?
4. More and more exclusive residential areas in the US are becoming gated communities, walled and guarded to keep out "undesirable elements of society".
Exville, California, is considering such a change and has invited all the property owners to an important meeting. You are one of these property owners and feel you have to convince a majority of your position. Write down your speech.

III. Translation

50

Translate the following text into German:

The rise in immigration and its changing composition after 1970 renewed the ambivalence and even hostility that Americans felt toward immigrants. Given the rate of immigration, averaging about one million annually in the 1990s, and high birth rates among Latinos¹, projections suggested that by 2050 Hispanics¹ would rise to 25 percent of the United States population, while whites would shrink to a bare majority. Sounding much like Theodore Roosevelt during World War I, Patrick J. Buchanan, the politician most concerned publicly about immigration, warned in 1994 that the United States was heading for social fragmentation: "If America is to survive as 'one nation, one people', we need to call a timeout on immigration to assimilate the tens of millions who have lately arrived."

The sluggish economy of the late 1980s and early 1990s, especially in California, helped fuel Americans' fears about the economic effects of immigration. Yet the initial impetus for a new immigration debate and movement to restrict the number of newcomers came from environmentalists, who were dissatisfied that groups like the Sierra Club¹ did not take positions favoring cuts in the migrant flow. They believed that too many people were coming to America and that the country's natural resources could not sustain a population growing at such a rate.

1) nicht übersetzen

From: Leonard Dinnerstein, *Ethnic Americans: a History of Immigration*
(New York, 1999).