

HISTORY I

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

Their attention is drawn to the more thematic questions at the end of the paper (questions 91-98), which are to be answered with reference to periods in the Common Era. (Answering any of these questions is not a requirement, and confers no advantage.)

1. Do late antique ethnographic writings reveal anything beside the prejudices of their authors?
2. How important were the Achaemenids as a template for Sasanian power?
3. Does it matter whether there was a 'flight of the decurions' in the later Roman empire?
4. How significant was the Judaic priesthood as a model for the late antique Church?
5. Was the Emperor Heraclius the first crusader?
6. Why should cultural historians care about ice cores?
7. How much confidence did the sick invest in the late antique cult of saints?
8. 'Late antique Egypt gives some idea of what Merovingian Gaul might have looked like if climatic conditions in Gaul did not prevent the preservation of papyrus' (ANDREW GILLET). Discuss the problem of documentary survival with reference to **ANY ONE** of the barbarian successor states.
9. Was the Umayyad Empire 'a garden protected by spears' (PETER BROWN)?
10. Can we speak of **EITHER** Sogdians **OR** Syrians as a trade diaspora in late antiquity?
11. Is the An Lushan rebellion better understood as an internal revolt or a steppe invasion?
12. Is Abbasid silver a sufficient explanation for the 'Viking Age'?
13. How extraordinary was Dhuoda?
14. Did Wang Anshi's reforms destroy the Northern Song?

[OVER]

15. 'If a Frank is your friend, then he is not your neighbour' (GREEK PROVERB, recorded in Einhard's *Life of Charlemagne*). How effectively did the Byzantine Empire respond to the challenge presented by the Latin kingdoms in the eleventh and twelfth centuries?
16. Why was there no 'Common Law Revolution' in the French parts of the Angevin Empire?
17. Assess the impact of the Cairo Geniza on our understanding of the Fatimid state.
18. Did scholastic humanism make Europe?
19. Why was poverty such an important aspect of thirteenth-century religious discourse?
20. Why was medieval Lithuania so resistant to Christianity?
21. How did the trade in **EITHER** gold **OR** ivory influence state-building in medieval Sub-Saharan Africa?
22. 'The royal business is wickedness' (HENRY OF HUNTINGDON). Who was in favour of government in the Middle Ages? You may answer with reference to **ANY ONE OR MORE** polities.
23. 'The quantity and quality of data that now exist prove conclusively that farm size and land productivity have generally been inversely related' (JOHN HATCHER). Discuss with reference to **ANY REGION** in the Middle Ages.
24. How receptive were medieval craftspeople to influences from other artistic media? Answer with reference to any of the following: illuminators, architects, glassmakers, textile-workers, metal-workers, ivory-workers, painters.
25. Were people in the Middle Ages ever able to conceive the past in **EITHER** historicist **OR** 'Whiggish' terms?
26. How did ideas about fertility relate to conceptions of female authority in **EITHER** pre-Columbian America **OR** medieval Eurasia?
27. Why did 'blood' become such a salient feature of late medieval discourse on social identities?

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28. 'But it is the religion of Zingis [Genghis Khan] that best deserves our wonder and applause... a barbarian, who... established by his laws a system of pure theism and perfect toleration' (EDWARD GIBBON). Have the religious attitudes of the Mongols been misunderstood?
29. How might studying the formation of tastes help historians understand global trade in the later Middle Ages?
30. How far was feudalism an early modern rather than medieval phenomenon?
31. Assess the impact of the conciliar movement on the late medieval Church.
32. Did women have a different Renaissance?
33. Assess the long-term consequences of the Black Death in Europe **AND/OR** Asia.
34. Assess the value of the Wittek thesis in explaining the rise of the Ottomans.
35. In what ways did the Battle of Bosworth contribute to English political stability?
36. 'The Reformation was a visual as well as a print phenomenon.' Discuss.
37. Analyse the continuing importance of Erasmian ideals throughout the early modern era.
38. 'Early modern republics were hangovers from the past rather than harbingers of the future.' Discuss.
39. To what extent was the Peace of Westphalia congruent with a 'Westphalian model' of international relations?
40. Was there such a thing as childhood in early modern Europe?
41. Was the 'military revolution' an exclusively European phenomenon?
42. What explains the precocious development of early modern North Sea economies?
43. What were the central themes of early modern Islamic political thought?

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44. Did peasant mentalities hold back economic growth in early modern eastern Europe?
45. Why did the Scientific Revolution not happen in China?
46. Why are historians no longer so preoccupied with the rise of the gentry?
47. To what extent did the divine right of bishops serve as a counterweight to the divine right of kings?
48. How fast did the Ottoman Empire decline after 1683?
49. When and why did witchcraft dwindle into mere folklore?
50. How far can we distinguish between the 'industrious' and the 'industrial' revolution?
51. Why did Poland–Lithuania never become one of the great powers?
52. 'Jansenism was the most disruptive force in eighteenth-century Europe.' Discuss.
53. How far do you detect different forms and flavours of Enlightenment in northern and southern Europe?
54. To what extent was Qing China a maritime empire?
55. Analyse the different systems of enslaved labour found in North America and the Caribbean during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.
56. Analyse the processes of identity formation in eighteenth-century South America.
57. Were the followers of Pitt the Younger Whigs or Tories?
58. To what extent was the French Revolution a repudiation of the *philosophes*?
59. Why did Liberal Spain fail to forge a liberal policy in America after 1820?
60. Why was the growth of real wages in Great Britain so modest during the period c. 1815–50?

[OVER]

61. Is it possible to write a history of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century that is not primarily focused on the process of Westernisation?
62. Compare **AT LEAST TWO** of the following three movements from c. 1850 to 1950: European migration, Chinese migration, Indian migration.
63. In what sense did the 1848 Revolution prove to be 'a great and lasting success' (ROBERT EVANS) throughout Habsburg Europe?
64. What was the basis of popular support for the Taiping Rebellion?
65. Was the colonisation of Liberia *sui generis*?
66. What impact did industrialisation have on the organisation of, and relationships within, the family?
67. Were nineteenth-century novelists able to offer any distinctive insights into their societies?
68. May we speak of 'strategy' in wars before Clausewitz?
69. Did Chartism have any lasting effects?
70. 'The first sweetened cup of hot tea to be drunk by an English worker was a significant historical event because it prefigured the transformation of an entire society' (SIDNEY MINTZ). Discuss the transformation of a society in the nineteenth century with reference to **ONE** food or drink.
71. Evaluate Lenin's thesis that imperialism must be understood as a stage of capitalism.
72. 'Secularisation, RIP' (RODNEY STARK). Discuss the merits and limits of the secularisation thesis.
73. How instructive is the distinction **EITHER** between art and entertainment **OR** between art and propaganda in analysing twentieth-century society?
74. Assess the failures and successes of **EITHER** the League of Nations **OR** the Communist International **OR** Japanese Pan-Asianism **OR** Black internationalism.
75. Was sexuality 'emancipated' in the twentieth century?

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76. How did arid landscapes shape international relations in the twentieth century?
77. To what extent was early twentieth century China 'semi-colonial'?
78. How involved were women in anti-colonial resistance?
79. Why did the recession of c. 1929–1937 come to be characterised as the 'Great Depression'?
80. Was the Second World War primarily a conflict of rival empires?
81. How comparable is the Holocaust to other genocidal 'extreme situations' in the twentieth century?
82. What were the consequences of **EITHER** the Palestine war (1948) **OR** the Six-Day/June war (1967) in the Middle East?
83. When and how did indigenous mobilisation become integral to national politics?
84. What was the significance of Mau Mau?
85. Did the Cold War permanently mobilise scientists for the first time?
86. 'History will absolve me' (FIDEL CASTRO). Discuss.
87. Why did both the monarchy and the reigning monarch survive the post-war Occupation of Japan?
88. When and how did the twentieth century become the 'American Century'?
89. How did the end of empires impact politics and social relations in former imperial metropolises? Discuss with reference to **AT LEAST TWO** regions.
90. 'A smooth superhighway... at [whose] end lies disaster' (RACHEL CARSON, 1962). How did twentieth-century views of the environment become divided between 'catastrophist' and 'techno-optimist' positions?

[OVER]

The following questions may be answered with reference to any period or periods in the Common Era, and any location.

91. Discuss the relationship between ecology and empire with reference to **AT LEAST TWO** regions.
92. Historicise reform.
93. Is there one history of human rights, or several?
94. Have historians gone too far in their efforts to treat anger as a socially rational impulse?
95. 'Every civilisation has its own classical era.' Discuss.
96. How different is the problem of Eurocentrism from the general problem of ethnocentrism in the writing of history?
97. 'In all ages, whatever the form and name of government, be it monarchy, republic, or democracy, an oligarchy lurks behind the façade' (RONALD SYME). Discuss.
98. How might historians benefit from studying 'techniques of the body' (MARCEL MAUSS)? Answer with reference to **ONE OF**: dance, facial expression, gait, gesture, musical technique, posture.

[END]

HISTORY II

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

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1. Was the Principate good for social mobility?
2. Has New Institutional Economics taught us anything we did not already know about the Roman economy?
3. Account for the rise of Syriac as a learned **AND/OR** liturgical language in late antiquity.
4. 'It has been said that the spade cannot lie, but it owes this merit in part to the fact that it cannot speak' (PHILIP GRIERSON). Assess the limitations for late antique historians of **ANY ONE** type of material evidence.
5. How serious were fourth- and fifth-century pagans' efforts to develop **EITHER** their own canon of religious texts **OR** their own 'Church'?
6. Did women have a transformation of the Roman world?
7. Can early medieval societies be characterised as post-industrial?
8. What was the point of taxation in the barbarian successor states?
9. Why was *imperium* such a persistent feature of political discourse in the early medieval British Isles?
10. Why did the Abbasid fiscal system survive the collapse of the Abbasid Empire?
11. 'At heart "iconoclasm" was about... how the visual in the form of icons allowed all people in the Orthodox world to interact with God and God's representatives without having to negotiate the hierarchy of the official church' (LESLIE BRUBAKER). Do you agree?
12. Why did Tang China become so intolerant in the ninth century?
13. Why did lay abbots proliferate in the time of Carolingian *correctio*?

[OVER]

14. What was the economic function of 'mushroom' (or 'pop-up') cities in the Middle Ages? You may answer with reference to **ONE OR MORE** regions.
15. Can James Holt's characterisation of Norman England as a 'colonial' society be taken seriously today?
16. How distinct were love and desire? You may answer with reference to **ONE OR MORE** regions in medieval Eurasia.
17. Did high medieval court culture owe more to Cicero than to Scripture?
18. Why do Muslims seem to have focused on converting other Muslim groups, rather than Christians, in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Middle East?
19. Was the rise of footbinding in China driven by masculine desire or feminine agency?
20. Can university men really be held to blame for rising intolerance toward Jews in the later Middle Ages?
21. What role did 'private judges' play at the medieval Champagne Fairs?
22. Were Church-building and State-building synonymous in medieval Russia?
23. 'Philosophy is the special province of the unbelievers; we have it all from them' (ROGER BACON). Discuss.
24. 'Medieval accounts of animal trials tell us more about dispute resolution among humans than about human-animal relations.' Discuss.
25. 'We and you, our people and your people, free since ancient times, have sprung from one national stock, and a common language and common custom stir us to come together eagerly and joyfully in friendship' (ROBERT THE BRUCE, writing to the Irish, 1315). How important were language-groups in medieval identity-formation?
26. How useful is **EITHER** the Atlantic Ocean **OR** the Sahara Desert **OR** the Steppe as a unit of analysis for medieval historians?
27. How extraordinary was Montailou?

[OVER]

28. Why does sexual exploitation appear to have been a distinctive feature of the Mediterranean slave trade in the later Middle Ages?
29. Have historians underplayed the importance of human sacrifice within the Aztec empire?
30. To what extent was Burgundy a 'failed state'?
31. Why were popular revolts more common in the later Middle Ages than in previous centuries?
32. Analyse the variety of state formation in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Africa.
33. Assess the significance of the later Lollards.
34. What was the impact of neo-Confucianism in Japan **AND/OR** Korea?
35. Is it reasonable to expect that early modern historians should know as much about Martin Guerre as about Martin Luther?
36. How important for sixteenth-century government was rule by an adult male?
37. What were the distinctive features of early modern England's demographic regime?
38. Assess the effects of the Great Inflation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
39. Assess the importance of patristics in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century intellectual life.
40. Why were late Ming emperors so ineffective?
41. Do we exaggerate the importance of political thought for early modern politics?
42. Why did Christian missionaries meet with such limited success in early modern East Asia?
43. To what extent is a seventeenth-century coffee-cup a good indicator of economic growth?

[OVER]

44. 'Early modern Europe was as much a scene of cooperation as it was of conflict.' Discuss.
45. How far do historians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries underestimate the importance of the Holy Roman Empire?
46. 'Simple polarisation does not explain the outbreak and course of the mid seventeenth-century Wars of the Three Kingdoms.' Discuss.
47. Why was there no seventeenth-century Scientific Revolution in chemistry?
48. Assess the changing features of Socinianism between the late sixteenth and late eighteenth centuries.
49. Explain the mechanics of the Tokugawa shogunate.
50. Did the Glorious Revolution of 1688 mark a discontinuity in English economic history?
51. 'Globally, the most significant event in 1707 was the death of Aurangzeb.' Discuss.
52. Was Nader Shah Iran's first 'modern' king?
53. 'Early modern people were born, married and died in the same village.' How far is this true?
54. Assess the influence of the Great Awakening on the American Revolution.
55. 'The French in the 1780s were too preoccupied with ballooning and mesmerism to bother with politics.' Discuss.
56. Why Switzerland?
57. What brought an end to the Enlightenment?
58. Did Brazil really become independent in 1822?
59. Could Napoleon's Continental System have been made to work?
60. 'Poor Mexico, so far from God and so near to the United States!' (PORFIRIO DÍAZ). Discuss with reference to **EITHER** the nineteenth **OR** the twentieth century.

[OVER]

61. Discuss the relationship between liberalism and slavery in **AT LEAST TWO** Latin American and Caribbean societies.
62. What were the Romantics rebelling against?
63. The United States in the nineteenth century: nation or empire?
64. What were the causes of the 1857 Uprising?
65. Does it make sense to speak of an 'Islamic enlightenment'?
66. How socially inclusive was the ideal of politeness?
67. How did European colonial states transform **EITHER** gender relations **OR** concepts of gender amongst their colonial subjects?
68. Was Eric Williams wrong about the connection between transatlantic slavery and the Industrial Revolution?
69. How did technological developments shape collaboration in artistic production? Discuss with reference to **AT LEAST TWO** media.
70. How did the rise of the psychological sciences in the late nineteenth century reshape politics?
71. How instructive is a comparison between the Russian Civil War and its Chinese counterpart?
72. Did the rise of modern fashion control or free the body?
73. Was 'bourgeois Europe recast' (CHARLES MAIER) after the First World War?
74. Was the 'Woman's Question' the same as feminism?
75. Assess the social consequences of Mustafa Kemal's reforms.
76. Did the social welfare of families improve more under fascist or liberal regimes?
77. What grand strategy, if any, did Japan pursue in the Pacific War 1941–45?
78. 'The "Final Solution" was not a preconceived plan but a discovered possibility' (CHRISTOPHER BROWNING). Discuss.

[OVER]

79. Account for the emergence of a Soviet empire, 1945–9.
80. The internationalism of the United Nations has been described as both decolonial and imperialist. Which is the case?
81. To what degree did Western Europe’s recovery from the Second World War rely on deliberate forgetfulness about the recent past?
82. How different was Jim Crow from Apartheid?
83. Why was democracy so hard to sustain in post-colonial states? You may answer with reference to **ONE OR MORE** regions.
84. How did nuclear weapons change the world?
85. How far does **ANY ONE** of the following events reveal the ideological conflict of the Cold War: the Bandung Conference, the Suez Crisis, the Algerian War, the Cultural Revolution in China.
86. Account for the popularity of the monarchy in twentieth-century Britain.
87. Analyse the causes and consequences of German reunification, c. 1985–2000.
88. Explain the eclipse of the Indian National Congress after 1989.
89. ‘The history of gay liberation is the history of the assimilation of marginal identities into the mainstream.’ Discuss.
90. Account for the rise of Big Pharma.

The following questions may be answered with reference to any period or periods in the Common Era, and any location.

91. Does a high percentage of female household heads indicate a good or a bad social position for women?

[OVER]

92. To what extent is the history of political thought inseparable from the history of the book?
93. Why have some communities been more resilient to epidemics than others?
94. 'The study of collecting practices tells us less about the history of private life than about the development of political institutions.' Discuss.
95. Is 'popular morality' a useful category of historical enquiry?
96. Has asceticism caused economic growth, or vice versa?
97. 'The outcomes of wars are determined more by planning and logistics than by battles.' Discuss.
98. What would a history of boredom look like?