

Paper Reference(s)

**9846/01**

**Edexcel**

**History**

**Advanced Extension Award**

**Monday 23 June 2003 – Afternoon**

**Time: 3 hours**

**Materials required for examination**

Answer book (AB16)

**Items included with question papers**

Nil

**Instructions to Candidates**

In the boxes on the answer book, write your centre number, candidate number, paper reference, surname and other names, and your signature. The box entitled Examining Body should be left blank.  
**Answer ALL parts of the question in Section A and ONE question from Section B.**

**Information for Candidates**

The total mark for this paper is 60: 40 marks for Section A and 20 marks for Section B.  
**You will not be credited for using the same information in more than one answer.**

**Advice to Candidates**

You are advised to spend two hours on Section A (Question 1) and one hour on Section B.  
You are reminded of the importance of clear and orderly presentation in your answers.

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**Edexcel**  
*Success through qualifications*

# SECTION A

## Question 1

Study Sources 1 and 2 and then answer questions (a) to (c) which follow:

### SOURCE 1

*Taken from 'The Practice of History', a book written by G.R. Elton, first published in 1969. G.R. Elton (1921–94) was Professor of History at Cambridge University.*

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1 Historical works belong to one of three categories: description, analysis and narrative. Description attempts to display a manifestation of the past without giving it the dimension of a change in time. Analysis is still fundamentally static but sets the situation or thing described in a wider context of adjoining situations and things, studies interrelations, and  
5 attempts to establish causal connections and motives. Narrative tells the story.

It is a fairly common error to suppose that narrative and analysis answer, respectively, the questions 'how' and 'why'. Those questions, together with 'what', 'when' and 'who', underlie all historical discussion, no matter what form it may take. Nor can analysis overlook the fact of time, or narrative ignore the simultaneous occurrence of various events;  
10 otherwise the former would not be history (it might be something like sociology) and the latter would be chronicle. The real question to which analysis in the main addresses itself is 'what was it like', while narrative concentrates on the question 'how did it happen'. The analytical method takes a problem, or a complex of problems, and investigates them by dissecting them into their component parts and relationships. Narrative, of course, tells the  
15 story. The first (analysis) requires a table of topics; it organises its subject matter under headings and deals with each heading in turn. The second (narrative) arranges things in a series of happenings and divides its matter in the main into chronologically consecutive segments. Both are legitimate methods and both must consider significant questions. However, fashion supposes that analysis is superior; narrative at present is under a cloud.

20 Analysis can be very static and prevent an understanding of change: this is one danger to guard against. To be satisfactory, analysis must incorporate narrative. This is to say, while the fundamental organisation of any book asking 'what was it like' should be by topics and sections, each topic must not only be organically linked to the rest but must also run through time and remember change. However, if the question obviously posed by the purpose of a  
25 book is 'what happened', then analysis must not be allowed to usurp the place of narrative. The historian faced with the task of writing an account of some large piece of history – the history of a country, a continent, or an age – cannot avoid a basic structure which concentrates on the chronological element, the passage through the years. Otherwise he cannot possibly convey the essential feel of time passing, men succeeding each other, lives  
30 being lived and deaths being died.

Unhappily, any attempt to restore narrative to a respectable place in the historian's armoury runs into the reformer's most awkward problem: the unwanted allies which surround him. It cannot be denied that a good deal of the occasional clamour against 'technical' and analytical

line  
35 history, or the sort of praise for story-telling one encounters in the worthier lay periodicals,  
arises from intellectual indolence and the desire for popular success. The defender of  
historical narrative as a profound form of writing history faces one further handicap in the  
prevalence of biographies. Though biography is really a separate art, with rules and  
problems of its own, most people seem to think of it as simply a form of history; yet, in so  
40 far as it is history, it tends to underline the potential weakness of narrative. It is certainly  
historical, and it is bound to be narrative in its main structure. Since it deals with an  
individual's life it possesses a given beginning and a known end between which the  
sequence of events runs clearly in one direction. The biographer thus has his first problem  
solved for him: neither the limits of his study nor its basic structure are open to choice. Now  
in England, at least, biographies are innumerable; their production forms one of the  
45 country's most flourishing industries, and they are well liked by readers. Whatever may be  
true of the bulk of them, quite a few are admirable. What matters here is that even at its best,  
biography is a poor way of writing history. The biographer's task is to tell the story,  
demonstrate the personality, and elucidate the importance of one individual; he should not  
be concerned with the history of that individual's times except in so far as it centres upon or  
50 emanates from him. In measure as he deserts his proper subject for what concerns the  
historian, that subject's age, he fails in his own task. Very occasionally, a 'great man's' life  
may prove a tool useful for opening a problem of history – some kings or statesmen can  
serve this purpose – but even when the tool is useful it is not the best available. The limits  
of one man's life rarely have any meaning in this interpretation of history; even if his death  
55 marks a period (and how rarely this happens) his birth will not. However influential he may  
have been, no individual has ever dominated his age to the point where it becomes sensible  
to write its history purely around him. And, above all, those parts of his career that may  
carry the greatest historical significance are not likely to be those on which a biographer  
should mainly concentrate. He should give much weight to those private relationships and  
60 petty concerns which have little to tell the historian; in particular, if he is to understand his  
subject's personality, he should deal thoroughly with those formative years during which the  
history of the age is likely to be quite unaware of the growing man. None of this speaks  
against biography as a form of writing, but it does mean that biography is not a good way of  
writing history. The historian should know the histories and characters of many men, as he  
65 should know much else, but he should not write biography – or at least should not suppose  
that in writing biography he is writing history. The low esteem in which biography is often  
held – not without reason – therefore offers no argument at all against narrative history: the  
two are different things.

## SOURCE 2

Taken from 'Studying History', a book written by Jeremy Black and Donald MacRaild, published in 1997. Jeremy Black is Professor of History at Exeter University and Donald MacRaild is Head of History at the University of Northumbria.

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1 Traditional history usually assumes the narrative form. Narrative, the sequential telling of a story, has for long been the subject of debate. From its inception in 1929, the *Annales* school<sup>1</sup> dismissed narrative as simply the history of events, that which Braudel<sup>2</sup> dubbed mere foam on the waves of history. And since that time, the historical community has been riven  
5 between those who write biographies and narratives and those who emphasise the importance of structures.

Narrative has the advantage of being readable. At the same time, narrative often overlooks causation, and, more specifically, there is a risk that the narrative of events becomes the history of many biographies. For this reason, narrative and biography are often one and the  
10 same thing; it is also because of this that they draw the same criticisms. Let us consider biography itself, for biography is in a sense both the zenith and the nadir of the literary narrative form.

Biography has generated criticism. In the first place, biographers are accused of a sentimental attachment to the life they study. There is likely to be an identification with the  
15 subject matter. In turn, it is argued, this necessarily provides for an interpretation which is biased, overly sympathetic, insufficiently detached and unobjective. What other deficiencies does biography as history have? It has been suggested that, historically, it has always relied too heavily on intuitive method and selective use of sources. A biographer, in other words, will obtain a 'feel' of what a character is like and then select evidence which  
20 proves or illustrates the biographer's perception.

There is good and bad biography, just as there is good and bad history. At root, though, is the problem of who writes historical biographies. In many cases they are the products of amateurs – often amateurs without a sufficient sense of historical context – who flit, as Norman Gash<sup>3</sup> noted, 'like butterflies from flower to flower, from century to century, from  
25 country to country in their endless quest for rewarding subjects'. The important point has to be that, without the historical context in which they should be embedded, the subjects of these biographies can easily loom larger than life. Amateur historians, therefore, almost by accident or omission, oversimplify and distort. In this way, the case might be made for historical biography rather than simply biography.

30 Much history is concerned with the analysis and interpretation of situations, events, policies, organisations, legislation, and so on. Biography poses different problems. It focuses, or it should focus, on temperament, character and personality; moreover, these are less precise and more difficult things. Equally, historical biography is nothing but hagiography<sup>4</sup> if the writer fails to understand and state those crucial matters of context which dwarf even the  
35 giants of history like Hitler and Stalin. Thus, it can be argued, historical biography is demanding indeed. Norman Gash's eloquent defence of the art form is extremely persuasive. He refutes the charge that biographies are easy to write. On the contrary, Gash

line

argues, the biographer must know the subject's society as well as his own, and must convey the actor's character to the reader in a convincing fashion. In addition to this, the task of the  
40 biographer is to balance 'private motives and public issues': to encompass the many spheres of influence of the central character. Not only this, but also 'to give physical appearance, the voice, the gestures, the little human touches familiar to contemporaries, to bring to bear on evidence a disciplined imagination without which the biography itself remains dead'.

Gash then went on to articulate three key and distinct justifications of biography as a  
45 legitimate, worthy but, above all, scholarly branch of historical inquiry. First, he argued, it is 'philosophically legitimate' to study men and their actions. Secondly, that it is 'professionally valuable' to do so – that there is something to be learned, that the skills required are those of the historian and not those of the hack or hagiographer. Thirdly, that it is 'humanely important' to write lives, by which he means there is value and interest in  
50 writing about past human lives.

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<sup>1</sup> The *Annales* school of historians, named after the journal they founded, argued that history should focus on the study of large-scale social change over long periods of time.

<sup>2</sup> Fernand Braudel (1902–85) was a leading member of the *Annales* school of historians.

<sup>3</sup> Norman Gash was formerly Professor of History at the University of St Andrews and wrote a major biography of the nineteenth-century British statesman Sir Robert Peel.

<sup>4</sup> hagiography = idealising or idolising biography.

(Maximum marks)

**(a) Study lines 1–30 of Source 1.**

In what ways, according to the author of Source 1, do ‘narrative’ and ‘analysis’ differ as forms of historical writing?

(6)

**(b) Study Source 1.**

The author of Source 1 suggests that asking and answering questions about the causes of events is one of the historian’s central tasks (see lines 3–8 of Source 1). What, in your view, are the characteristics of a good explanation of the causes of long-term historical change? Develop your answer by reference to any period or periods you have studied.

(14)

**(c) Study Sources 1 and 2.**

‘Biography is a poor way of writing history’ (see line 47 of Source 1). Making reference to both sources, and to your own historical reading, assess the validity of this view.

(20)

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**(TOTAL: 40 marks)**

## SECTION B

Answer ONE question from this Section.

You will not be credited in this Section for repeating information you have used in Section A.

(Maximum marks)

2. 'History is nothing more than the study of the politics of the past.' How far do you agree with this view? Develop your answer by specific reference to any period or periods you have studied.

(20)

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3. To what extent does the fact that historians can never be completely objective invalidate history as an academic discipline? Develop your answer by specific reference to any period or periods you have studied.

(20)

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4. 'Only in the fields of science and technology is there evidence of progress in history.' To what extent do you agree with this statement? Develop your answer by specific reference to any period or periods you have studied.

(20)

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5. 'The trouble with history *on* television is that it always becomes history *for* television: excessively personalized and trivial.' How far do you agree with this view? Develop your answer by reference to your own historical reading and viewing.

(20)

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**TOTAL FOR PAPER: 60 MARKS**

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