

Paper Reference(s)

9846/01

Edexcel

History

Advanced Extension Award

Thursday 19 June 2008 – 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, your surname and initials, the paper reference and your signature. The paper reference is shown above. The box entitled Examining Body should be left blank.

Answer ALL parts of the question in Section A and ONE question in Section B.

Write your answers in the answer book provided.

Additional answer sheets may be used.

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 English and orderly presentation in your answers.

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SECTION A

Question 1

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

Write your answers in the answer book provided.

SOURCE 1

Taken from Michael Howard, *The Lessons of History*, a book published in 1991. Michael Howard was Professor of Modern History at Oxford University (1980–1989) and at Yale University (1989–1993).

Line

Only a tiny minority of students come to universities to learn how to be professional historians. The state provides money, and students are encouraged to read history, because it is still believed that a knowledge of the past is essential to an understanding of the present. It is, however, safe to start with the assumption that history teaches no ‘lessons’, and professional historians will be as
5 sceptical of those who claim that it does as doctors are of their colleagues who peddle medicines guaranteeing instant cures. We know how incomplete our knowledge of the past is bound to be. New evidence is constantly suggesting fresh perspectives and fresh conclusions.

The professional historian therefore tends to be impatient of the non-specialist who seeks guidance from him in dealing with the questions of his own day. The historian’s time is fully occupied in
10 trying to discover, as best he can, not only what really happened in the past, but, increasingly, what the past was really like; in recreating the intellectual and social structures which will enable him to explain events. And this, for the non-specialist, is maddening. The non-specialist looks for wise teachers who will use their knowledge of the past to explain the present and guide him as to the future. What does he find? Workmen, busily engaged in tearing up what he had regarded
15 as a perfectly decent highway; doing their best to discourage him from proceeding along it at all; and warning him, if he does, that the surface is temporary, that they have no idea when it will be completed, nor where it leads, and that he proceeds at his own risk.

Well, the road works of history have to be done, and of course they are never complete. Even if no new evidence compelled us to review our ideas about the past, the continual reshaping of
20 our own minds by the events and social processes of our own times would make us ask new questions and discard earlier interpretations as inadequate. None the less, all this work must have some object in view. It cannot be simply the study of the past ‘for its own sake’, for outside the minds and writings of historians the past has no independent reality. If we as historians demand considerable sums of public money it is not to enable us simply to cultivate and refine our own
25 perceptions. It is because we can claim to serve a more fundamental social purpose; and if we do not fulfil it things can go very wrong with our society indeed.

I am aware that the argument that historians have a social function is not likely to be welcome among scholars. ‘Socially useful’ or ‘relevant’ history, whether consciously or unconsciously selected or tailored to meet contemporary social or political needs, has no place in a university
30 or anywhere else. But there is a danger that this is the kind of history that would get taught if the historical profession did not exist to prevent it. For all societies have some view of the past – one that shapes their collective consciousness. The historian cannot escape from the present. But he can ensure that our view of the past is not distorted by fraud, by evident prejudice or by simple error. Our primary professional responsibility is to keep clear and untainted those sources
35 of knowledge that ultimately provide the basis for school text books and for the popular histories which are now piped to every household in the country through television screens.

Line

So the first lesson that historians are entitled to teach is not to generalise from false premises based on inadequate evidence. The second is that the past is a foreign country; there is very little we can say about it until we have learned its language and understood its assumptions. In
40 reaching conclusions about the processes which occurred in it and applying them to our own day we must be very careful indeed. The most difficult of the historian's tasks is to understand the beliefs and assumptions which held past societies together. Here the historian needs the quality of imagination – a quality needed as much in dealing with the recent as it is with the more remote
45 past. It is a quality best used, not in creating alternative 'scenarios' of the past, but in recreating the structure of beliefs that determined actions and perhaps made some actions more likely than others.

The value of history as a training in judgement and the imagination is very limited if it is exercised in recreating our own society's past, with very little reference to the total context within which our own society developed. If we are properly to educate our students, it is not enough to awaken
50 an interest in the past to provide them with an agreeable leisure occupation. It is not enough to provide for them scholarly exercise in the handling of evidence on which they can sharpen their wits. We have to teach them how to step outside their own cultural skins and enter the minds of others. Important as is the contribution made by neighbouring disciplines such as geography, the study of history alone can teach how to do this. And this is the third 'lesson' that historians
55 must teach: the importance of comprehending cultural diversity and equipping oneself to cope with it.

SOURCE 2

Taken from John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, a book published in 2000. John Tosh is Professor of History at the University of North London.

Line

The training of academic historians instituted in the nineteenth century was – and still is – primarily intended to disabuse them of the notion that the facts can be apprehended without effort. The qualities most emphasised in manuals of historical method are accordingly mastery of the primary sources and critical skill in evaluating them.

- 5 But these skills can only take the historian one stage along the road. The historian also requires imagination. This term can easily lead to confusion in the context of historical writing. It is not intended to convey the idea of sustained creative invention. The point is rather that any attempt to reconstruct the past presupposes an exercise of imagination, because the past is never completely captured in the documents which it left behind. Again and again historians encounter gaps in
10 the record which they can fill only by being so thoroughly exposed to the surviving sources that they have a ‘feel’ or instinct for what might have happened. Issues relating to motive and mentality often fall into this category, and the more alien and remote the culture the greater the imaginative leap required to understand it. Those books condemned as ‘dry-as-dust’ are usually the ones in which the accumulation of detail has not been brought to life by the play of the writer’s
15 imagination.

The ability to empathise with people in the past presupposes a certain self-awareness, and some historians have gone so far as to suggest that psychoanalysis might form part of the historian’s training. Breadth of experience, however, is a much more promising foundation – experience of different countries, classes and temperaments – so that the range of imaginative possibilities in the
20 historian’s mind bears some relation to the range of conditions and mentalities in the past.

It is one thing to have an imaginative insight into the past, and quite another to convey this to the reader. Verbal or literary skills are of considerable importance to the historian. Good writing is more than an optional extra or a lucky bonus. The insights derived from the exercise of historical imagination cannot be shared at all without a good deal of literary flair – an eye for detail, the
25 power to evoke mood – qualities that are most fully developed in creative writing.

1. (a) Study lines 1–38 of Source 1.

According to the author of Source 1, what are the main responsibilities of the professional historian?

(6)

(b) Use your own knowledge.

In relation to any one historical period, issue or controversy that you have studied, explain how ‘fresh perspectives’ (Source 1, line 7) put forward by any one historian or school of historians have led to an earlier historical interpretation being challenged.

(14)

(c) Study Sources 1 and 2, and use your own knowledge.

The authors of both sources reflect on the role of imagination in the work of the historian. To what extent do you agree with the suggestion that imagination is the most important quality needed by the historian? Develop your answer by specific reference to Sources 1 and 2 and to your own historical reading.

(20)

TOTAL FOR SECTION A: 40 MARKS

SECTION B

Answer ONE question from this section. Write your answer in the answer book provided.

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

2. ‘Power corrupts.’ To what extent do you agree with this claim about the effect that political power has on those who wield it? Develop your answer by specific reference to holders of political power before the twenty-first century that you have studied.

(Total 20 marks)

3. ‘A force for conservatism rather than for change.’ To what extent do you agree with this observation on the social and political influence of religious institutions? Develop your answer by specific reference to any historical period or periods you have studied.

(Total 20 marks)

4. ‘Imperial rule has always been an unmitigated disaster for subject peoples.’ To what extent do you agree with this view? Develop your answer by specific reference to any historical period or periods you have studied.

(Total 20 marks)

5. ‘Local history is an insignificant field of study which can safely be left to amateurs.’ To what extent do you agree with this view? Develop your answer by specific reference to your own historical study and reading.

(Total 20 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION B: 20 MARKS

TOTAL FOR PAPER: 60 MARKS

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