

**PRESIDENCY COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY**

ADMISSION TEST, 2008

Use separate sheet for each answer. Do not leave any identification mark on the answer-sheets. Answer Question No. 1 in English and the rest either in English or in Bengali. Try not to exceed the suggested word limit.

Q1. What divides or unites humanity more --- science or religion?

Marks : 25 (300 words)

Q2. Comprehension: -

Marks : 25

"... For historians, rewriting is a creative act; it is the way history as a mode of knowledge develops. In developing the new perspectives historians critique dominant frameworks – their enclosing limits and repressions, their silences and erasures – and rework accepted notions of the past.

The past does not come to us with a unitary truth embedded within it; the facts that historians mine do not ever speak with one single voice. As our perspectives change we look at the past in new ways, reinterpret events, discover new meanings within them, pose new questions that could not even be formulated within the limits of the earlier frameworks of analysis. So historians tell different stories of the same past, refigure evidence in diverse ways in the act of rewriting history – an act that enriches our conceptions of the past.

The act of rewriting history itself is not objectionable. But all forms of rewriting are not the same. If rewriting is so integral to the growth of historical knowledge, we need to continuously examine the nature of rewriting: the assumptions that underlie the arguments, the questions that are posed, the mode in which knowledge is authenticated, the structure of the story that is elaborated. And in scrutinizing the process we need to differentiate between ways of rewriting that are legitimate and productive and those that are problematic and intellectually unacceptable.

It is through the practice of rewriting that historians of India have continuously rethought their notions of the past. History in India began as a modern career implicated in projects of colonial knowledge. And post colonial subjects, just as much as historians, have struggled against this legacy – a legacy embedded in the sources that were collected and stored, the institutions that were built up, and the colonial conceptions of history that became a part of our commonsense."

(Neeladri Bhattacharya, Seminar, 522: Rewriting History, February, 2003.

i). Does the article suggest that all history books have an unwritten 'expiry date'?

এই প্রবন্ধ কি সুদৃষ্টি দিয়ে যে সমস্ত ইতিহাস গ্রন্থেরই এক অসিদ্ধিত ব্যবহারিক 'শেষ সময়সীমা' থাকে ?
(150 words)

ii) While rewriting history of India why should a modern day historian reject the colonial concepts of history?

ভারতের ইতিহাস পুনর্লিখনের ক্ষেত্রে বর্তমান যুগের ইতিহাসবিদকে কি কারণে ঔপনিবেশিক যুগের ইতিহাসের ধারণা সমূহকে বর্জন করতে হবে ?
(150 words)

Q 3. Match the pairs (underlined bold typed words) and make two columns from the article given below. Write a short note on any of the pairs.

নিম্নলিখিত প্রবন্ধ থেকে যুগলের মধ্যে মেলবন্ধন ঘটাও এক দুটি তালিকা প্রস্তুত কর। কোন একটি যুগলের উপর সংক্ষিপ্ত টীকা লেখ।
Marks : 10 + 15 (100 words)

A globe trotting friend of mine came back from the Republic of Korea. He had once written a brilliant article on the painting 'Sunflower'. He said that in a fortnight he would visit either Puri to see the Jagannatha Temple or Ellora caves for the Kailash Temple. Recently he finished reading The Calcutta Chromosome and the Wings of Fire, but did not find any of the books very interesting. I spoke to him for an hour on a Blue Period painting. Our favourite song is 'Yellow Submarine' and our favourite book is 'India Wins Freedom'. Last time he had written to me was on a picture postcard with a Picasso painting. That was over three years ago when A.P. J. Abdul Kalam was the President of India. As we had tea I reminded him the way we used to fiercely debate the work of the Boundary Commission in 1947. He said, "Some years from now we will debate the work of Ban Ki-moon in a similar way". I told him that he always took the side of Cyril Radcliffe. He said, "But I also staunchly supported Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, have you forgotten that?" This friend of mine is unique. You can talk to him about anything you feel like. His knowledge is immense. He can discuss the Beatles, the Eastern Ganga and Rashtrakuta dynasties with equal ease. Some day I will ask him to tell me something of his research on Vincent van Gough. I still clearly remember the way he mesmerized me with a talk on Ronald Ross and the way he invented medicine for malaria.

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Creative writing either in the form of dialogue or in the form of essay!

Q4. Priyanka Chopra, a noted Mumbai film actress, projects herself as a rare success story hailing from a small town of India. Imagine a dialogue between Ms. Chopra and yourself on the subject of subjugation and oppression suffered by women from time immemorial.

মুম্বাই এর এক বিখ্যাত চিত্রাঙ্কিনী প্রিয়াংকা চোপড়া নিজেকে ভারতের কোন একটি ছোট শহরের একটি মেয়ের অসামান্য সাফল্যের সূচী হিসাবে প্রচার করেন। সমগ্র ইতিহাস জুড়ে নারীজাতির লাঞ্ছিত ও নির্ব্যক্তিত হওয়ার বিষয়ে প্রীমতি চোপড়ার সাথে তোমার একটি কল্পনিক সংলাপ রচনা কর।

Marks : 25 (300 words)