

# OXFORD COLLEGES' HISTORY APTITUDE TEST

31 October 2007

Answer **ALL** parts of **BOTH** questions. You have **TWO HOURS** for this test. We recommend that you spend about a third of that time on reading, thinking and planning, and the rest of the time writing. Question One should take about twice as much time as Question Two.

If you find the texts difficult and unfamiliar, don't worry: the exercise is intended to be challenging, but we hope you will also find it thought-provoking. There is no 'right' answer to many of the questions: you will be judged on the intelligence of your case, how clearly you make it and how effectively you support it. You should use your own words in answering the questions.

**Please do not turn over until you are asked to do so.**

**QUESTION ONE (70 marks)**

This is an adapted extract from a book about Renaissance Europe. Please read through the extract carefully and think about what it is trying to say. You do not need to know anything about the topic or the period to answer the questions below.

What all governments had in common was a striving to extend effective control over their subjects and to link the most common contemporary meaning of the word “state” – the power structure, that is, represented by a ruler and his ministers and chief officials – to the significance of what was then a less familiar usage: the state as a geographical catchment area of individuals owing a common obedience to central government. Whatever the terminology employed, the aim was the same: to make a ruler potent and unchallenged within his whole kingdom, to extend effective administration across it, to stimulate shared responses within the commonwealth of compatriots. The aim was hampered by earlier and stubbornly held assumptions about the government’s function: to preserve, and if judged appropriate extend, territory that had been won in the past; to protect legally defined privileges while striving to ensure that all men had access to “good justice”; to tax sparingly, for the common good and with advice; to foster the rights and influence of “true religion”. These were conservative values. When rulers, whether a king of France or a doge of Venice, swore to observe them at their coronation or election, they vowed in effect to stop the historical process in its tracks.

Yet in all cases, governments were forced to alter the status quo by the need to raise more money. As the tempo of international relations quickened from the later fifteenth century, the costs of diplomacy, from ambassadors to spies, rose to match their pace. The size of armies grew: from 12-30,000 before 1500, to 85,000 in the 1570s, to 100,000 and more by the 1620s. Better cannon meant that fortresses and town walls had to be rebuilt or strengthened. And war could throw up massive extras: to redeem the sons Francis I of France had left in Spain after his capture at the battle of Pavia in 1525 cost the equivalent of 3.6 tons of solid gold. As all governments were forced throughout the sixteenth century to spend more on war or defence or both, revenues had to rise: in France, for example, from 3.5 million *livres* in 1497 to 15 million in 1596, in Castile from 850,000 ducats in 1504 to 13 million in 1598. Overall in the course of the century state revenues rose by a factor of five. This was mainly due to the necessities of war, partly to voluntary expenditure on buildings and on lavish courts to inflate the ruler’s image. It was also due to larger government payrolls. However ingenious governments were at postponing taxes by

raising bridging loans from financiers, repayments, like normal expenditure, had to be met from internal revenues. And this involved extending the reach of administrative fingers into pockets previously guarded from them.

To do this, and to ensure the law and order that made administration effective, more officials had to be maintained. At the lowest level the numbers of copyists and file-clerks and book-keepers employed by earlier governments became inflated. New tasks, notably Spain's acquisition of territories in America and Italy, involved the creation of new governmental committees, but other governments, too, enlarged the departments which had dealt with different aspects of business: finance, foreign affairs, legal issues. Above this proletariat of inky toilers there was a thickening stratum of supervisors who not only co-ordinated the work of their departments but offered advice on knotty or debatable issues. It is at this level of responsibility that their prominence in contemporary records allows them to be counted: between three and four times the number shortly after 1600 than around 1500. In absolute terms this is unimpressive. In mid-sixteenth century France, for instance, with a population of about 18 million, there were no more than three thousand or so. And there were never enough of them, whether operating at the heart of government or in the provinces, to pump obedience along the venous system that connected a capital with a country as a whole to the extent which new legislation called for.

(a) What are the principal points made by the author in the first paragraph? Use your own words and do not write more than 15 lines.

(10 marks)

(b) Why, in the author's view, did the institutions of government grow in the period under discussion? Write an answer of about one side in length.

(20 marks)

(c) In an essay of two or three sides, identify and discuss the most important factors that changed the relationship between rulers and ruled in a period with which you are familiar.

(40 marks)

**PLEASE TURN OVER FOR QUESTION TWO**

**QUESTION TWO (30 marks)**

The following extract, written after the defeat of Japan in 1945, recalls a girl's experience at a school in Korea in the early twentieth century.

You are not expected to know anything about Korea or the period. You must read carefully and critically, and use your skills of historical analysis to interpret the extract.

One day we demanded that our teachers give us courses in Korean history. When they refused, I called three of my closest friends. "Let us find a Korean history book and each night copy a few pages. It will be slow work, but in time we each will have in our possession the treasured story of our nation."

I went alone to Pastor Kim's house and told him what I wanted to do. He looked at me for a few minutes and then smiled. "You are really determined to save Korea, aren't you? I will take a chance. But remember, you are taking a chance too. If the Japanese should ever find you with this book in your possession, they will chop off your head."

I told him I was not frightened, but I was, and he knew it. Nevertheless, he went to a secret hiding place and took out a beautiful leather-bound book on which were written the words *Dongkook Yuksa*. Translated literally, this means "Oriental History." But the book was written by Korean historians writing mainly about our country. He handed the book to me, saying, "Here is your heritage. Love it. Cherish it. Protect it."

I wrapped the book in the folds of my *sigachima* and returned to school. That night, my friends and I began our laborious task. But we kept on working, month after month. As soon as we finished a copy, we smuggled it out of the school grounds, and Pastor Kim helped us get it into the hands of patriotic young men and spiritual leaders who were forming secret study circles that would someday become centres of the resistance movement.

One morning, Miss Golden and a few of the teachers came to our class. Their faces were white. Miss Golden spoke, but did not look at us. "Girls, something is happening here that is not good for the school or for any of us. If I do not tell the Japanese police about it, and they find out by themselves, this school will be closed and all of you will be jailed, possibly beaten, perhaps even killed. You all know to what I am referring."

What does this extract tell us about society and culture in early twentieth-century Korea? (Write about one to two sides.)

(30 marks)

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