

OXFORD COLLEGES' HISTORY APTITUDE TEST

7 November 2012

Answer **ALL** parts of **BOTH** questions. You have **TWO HOURS** for this test. We recommend that you read the entire paper before beginning to write your answers. Spend about a third of your time on reading, thinking and planning, and the rest of the time writing. You should allow about seventy to seventy five minutes for Question One, and about forty five to fifty minutes for 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 (60 marks)

This is an adapted section from a book about the emergence of the modern world. Please read through the extract carefully and think about what it is trying to say. You do not need to know anything about nationalism to answer the questions below.

The emergence of nationalism was not a single event so much as a process. An inchoate¹ sense of nationality, generated by memories and traditions of earlier patriotisms, could be honed and moulded by the activity of a newly powerful state. This is not to say that the state created a sense of nationalism out of nothing: in the United States, for instance, a heightened sense of American nationalism was forged during the Civil War era, at least among the dominant northern population.

This last example reminds us of a condition for the emergence of nationalism which has remained rather marginal in most of the major “theories”: the importance of armed conflict among their constituent populations. The intensification of nationalism during the nineteenth century was itself pre-eminently a consequence of war and invasion. Nationalism defined itself against “others”. The experience of common military service, basic education in the ranks, and elite leadership widely transformed peasants and workers into nationalists. In turn, this militarized nationalism often gave rise to further wars and invasions. The world wars at the end of the nineteenth century speeded up the process by which the regional patriotisms of the old order were transformed into more exclusive and aggressive nationalisms. The multiple crises of the middle of the nineteenth century widely confirmed that transition, not only in Europe, but also in the Americas, the Middle East, and Asia. New industrial machinery and communications made a national community more visible, or at least more feasible.

- (a) In the first paragraph, how does the author account for the emergence of nationalism? Answer in one sentence, using your own words.

(10 marks)

- (b) How much importance does the author attach to armed conflict in the emergence of nationalism? Answer in not more than fifteen lines, using your own words.

(20 marks)

- (c) Write an essay of one and a half to three sides in which you assess the social and/or political impact of violent conflict on any society you have studied. Your answer may cover violent conflict within a society or in an international context.

(30 marks)

¹ Unformed, at an early stage

QUESTION TWO (40 Marks)

The following passage is adapted from a letter written by an eleven-year-old girl – Maria Holroyd – to her aunt Serena in July 1782. You do not need to know anything about eighteenth-century Britain to answer the question below, and you should not provide information from other sources.

Your letter quite delighted me; they are always so entertaining that (except papa and mama) I had rather have one letter from my dear Serena, than ten from anybody else. As I have not wrote to you for some time, I must tell you a few things about London, tho' we have been in the country for a month next Wednesday. About three weeks or a month before we went out of town, we went to Sadler's Wells²; Louisa³ went for the first time of her going into those sorts of places; she was as delighted as ever she could be. Have you ever been there? And how do you like it? For my part I liked it very much. Then we went to see the Polish Dwarf and the Irish Giant, I do not know whether you may have heard talk of them; the first is exactly three foot high, and the last eight foot, two inches. What a difference! I beg you will never make what you call an apology for not writing; you write when you please, and I write when I please without any set time. I will allow you to moralise as much as you please, for the more you do, the more agreeable are your letters. The Lessons you mention as having received from my dear Grandfather are excellent; and, pray God! I may profit by them as you have. You showed me an elegy⁴ on him, I think in French, made by yourself, may I beg a copy of it from you? I will keep it as the virtues of one who is now no more, and as a proof of my dearest Serena's talents. You say you felt like a young woman again the other day. Pray how long is it since you was an old one? I could have romped with you then just as I do at home. You think I do not regret London. I should not if the year was equally divided; but we are only five months in town, and seven in the country. I do not give you any settled time to write in, but be assured that my Serena's letters will always be acceptable to her most affectionate,

Maria Josepha Holroyd.

What can this extract tell us about social and family life in eighteenth-century Britain?

² A popular London theatre

³ Maria's younger sister

⁴ A serious poem, usually written to remember the dead