

ENTRANCE EXAMINATION, 2013

M.A. HISTORY

[Field of Study Code—Ancient : ANCM (219)/
Medieval : MEDM (218)/Modern : MODM (217)]

Time Allowed : 3 hours

Maximum Marks : 100

Note : Questions from all Sections must be attempted. The passage in Section—I is compulsory and carries 30 marks. Answer any **one** question from Section—II (it carries 20 marks) and any **two** questions from Section—III (each of these questions carries 25 marks).

Candidates must indicate their preferred choice of admission, e.g., Ancient, Medieval or Modern India on their answer book's cover-sheet in bold letters.

SECTION—I

Read the passage carefully and answer the following questions in your own words in not more than 100 words each. Copying from the text will be penalized :

PASSAGE

By the middle of the nineteenth century, India's colonial society was marked by a sharp disjunction between a small, alien ruling group, British in culture, and a quarter of a billion Indians whom the British effectively controlled. The military superiority of these aliens had just been successfully demonstrated in the brutal suppression of a widespread military and civil revolt which had spread through much of Upper India in 1857 and 1858. In the two decades that followed this military action, a theory of authority became codified, based on ideas and assumptions about the proper ordering of groups in Indian society, and their relationship to their British rulers. In conceptual terms, the British, who had started their rule as 'outsiders', became 'insiders' by vesting in their monarch the sovereignty of India through the Government of India Act of 2nd August, 1858. This new relationship between the British monarch, her Indian subjects and the native princes of India was proclaimed in all principal centres of British rule in India on 8th November, 1858...

The proclamation was based on two main assumptions : firstly that there was an indigenous diversity in culture, society and religion in India, and secondly that the foreign rulers had a responsibility for the maintenance of an equitable form of government which would be directed not only to protecting the integrity inherent in the diversity, but also to social and material progress which would benefit the ruled.

The proclamation can be viewed as a cultural statement which encompasses two divergent or even contradictory theories of rule : one which sought to maintain India as a feudal order, and the other looking towards changes which would inevitably lead to the destruction of this feudal order... If India were to be ruled in a feudal mode, then an Indian aristocracy had to be recognized and/or created, which could play the part of 'loyal feudatories' to their British queen. If India were to be ruled by the British in a 'modernist' mode, then principles which looked to a new kind of civic or public order had to be developed. Those adhering to this view desired a representational mode of government based sociologically on communities and interests with individuals representing these entities.

British adherents of both the feudal and the representational mode of colonial government shared a number of assumptions about the past and present of India, and the continued necessity and desirability of monarchical rule for India. In both modes, although Indians might become associated with their white rulers as feudatories or as representatives of communities and interests, effective system-wide decisions would be made by the British colonial rulers. The British rulers assumed that Indians had lost their right to self-rule through their own weakness, which led to their subjugation by a succession of 'foreign' rulers, stretching back to the Aryan invasions, and, in the more recent past, to the British conquest of the preceding imperial rulers of India, the Mughals. The apparent fact of Indian incompetence for self-rule was accepted by all the British concerned with ruling India...

Starting in 1858, as part of the re-establishment of political order, Lord Canning, the first Viceroy of India, undertook a series of extensive tours through North India to make manifest the new relationship proclaimed by the queen. These tours had as one of their main features *darbars*, meetings, with large numbers of princes, notables and Indian and British officials, at which honours and rewards were presented to Indians who had demonstrated their loyalty to their foreign rulers during the uprisings of 1857-58. At these *darbars* Indians were granted titles such as Raja, Nawab, Rai Sahib, Rai Bahadur, and Khan Bahadur, presented with special clothes and emblems (*khelats*), granted special privileges and some exemptions from normal administrative procedures, and given rewards in the form of pensions and land grants for various actions such as the protection of Europeans during the uprising and the provision of troops and supplies to the British armies. The form of these *darbars* was a model derived from court rituals of the Mughal emperors and utilized by eighteenth century Indian rulers, Hindu and Muslim, and then adapted by the British in the early nineteenth century with English officials acting as Indian rulers.

The central ritual which took place in the Mughal's *darbar* was an act of incorporation. The person to be thus honoured offered *nazar*, gold coins, and/or *peshkash*, valuables such as elephants, horses, jewels and other precious objects... The Mughal would present a *khelat*, which, narrowly construed, consisted of specific and ordered sets of clothes, including a cloak, turban, shawls, various turban ornaments, a necklace and other jewels, arms and shields, but could also include horses and elephants with various accoutrements as signs of authority and lordship... Under the Mughals and other Indian rulers, these ritual presentations constituted a relationship between the giver and receiver, and were not understood as simply an exchange of goods and values...

The British in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries tended to misconstrue these acts by seeing them as economic in nature and function. The offering of *nazar* and *peshkash* were seen as paying for favours, which the British then translated into 'rights' relating to their trading activities. In the case of the subordinates of Indian rulers, the rights established privileges which were the source of wealth and status. The objects which formed the basis of the relationship through incorporation—cloth, clothes, gold, silver, coins, animals, weapons, jewels and jewelry, and other objects—were construed by the British to be utilitarian goods which were part of their system of trade.

Questions :

- (a) How does the author explain the context of the proclamation of 1858?
- (b) What were the two assumptions on which the proclamation was based?
- (c) To what extent did the two divergent theories of rule mentioned by the author involve different strategies of implementation?
- (d) How does the author establish that there were shared assumptions between advocates of the feudal mode and the representational mode?
- (e) In what ways were Canning's *durbars* different from the Mughal *durbars*?
- (f) Were *nazar* and *peshkash* understood in similar ways by the Mughal and the British? Give reasons for your answer.

SECTION—II

Answer **any one** question

1. "Nationalism creates as many problems as it solves." Discuss.
2. Discuss the relationship between archaeology, history and cultural heritage.
3. Explain, in detail, why any two works of scholarship are worthy of being considered as landmarks in the study of South Asia.
4. Why do crimes against women persist in the 21st century?
5. Should historians choose to write on themes which were important then or those which are important now?

SECTION—III

Answer *any two* questions

1. How useful is the archaeological record for reconstructing the pasts of ordinary people during the Harappan period?
2. With reference to either Buddhism or Jainism, discuss the extent to which they posed a challenge to Vedic traditions.
3. To what extent can either the Maurya or the Gupta State be described as an empire?
4. What is the difference between diary, biography and autobiography? Discuss with examples the importance of at least one of the three types of writing as a source for the history of Mughal India.
5. How far were the Bhakti Movements used as a vehicle of dissent and protest in medieval India?
6. Mughal patronage to art and architecture was geared towards projecting a visual language of power. Discuss with examples.
7. What are the ways in which the telegraphs, railways and canals reveal the workings of British rule in India?
8. What were the different forces which shaped Gandhi's ascent to nationalist leadership between 1919 and 1922?
9. Give examples of unintended consequences in modern Indian history.
10. Examine the significance of the Renaissance and the Reformation in the emergence of modern Europe.
11. Write a comparative account of the French and the Russian Revolutions.
12. Discuss the impact of industrialization during the nineteenth century.
