



ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES TRIPOS PART II

Middle Eastern Studies

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**MES. 37 HISTORY OF THE PRE-MODERN MIDDLE EAST**

Answer **three** questions.

*Write your number **not** your name on the cover sheet of each answer booklet.*

**STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS**

*20 Page Answer Book x 1  
Rough Work Pad*

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

*None*

**You may not start to read the questions printed on the subsequent pages of this question paper until instructed that you may do so by the Invigilator.**

Answer **three** of the following questions

- 1 If Shah Isma‘il I was the inspiration for the establishment of the Safavid dynasty, it was Shah Tahmasp who put the regime on a firm footing. Discuss.
- 2 ‘The remaking of Iran’: how apt is this characterisation of the reign of Shah ‘Abbas I?
- 3 Safavid Persia was a “most miserable poore Countrey of money, little Commerce and trade within itself”. Discuss this English merchant’s assessment of Persia’s trade in the Safavid period.
- 4 Why is Persian literature of the Safavid period considered to be decadent?
- 5 Discuss the aspects of the art and architecture of the Safavids and the Mughals with a particular view to the cross-cultural links between these neighbouring Muslim states.
- 6 What was the nature of the debate in clerical circles between the immigrant *‘ulema* and those from a traditional Iranian background?
- 7 Why was the second Safavid century marked by an absence of major foreign wars?
- 8 How would you evaluate the Safavid State in comparison with the other two ‘gunpowder empires’ of the period?

**END OF PAPER**