



AET0

Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Tripos, Part IA

Tuesday 5 June 2018 9 to 12.00 pm

Paper MES6

Introduction to the history and culture of the Middle East

Answer **three** questions. All questions carry **equal** marks.

Answer **each** question in a **separate** answer booklet.

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

STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS

8 page answer booklet x 3

Rough Work Pad

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS TO BE SUPPLIED FOR THIS EXAMINATION

None

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

1. Discuss some of the historical factors that led to the emergence of a coherent Jewish polity in Palestine in the Second–Temple period.
2. Discuss the rabbinic movement (e.g., social background, key tenets), from its origins in the Second–Temple period and into the 2nd century CE.
3. Compare and contrast nascent Christianity with other forms of Second Temple Judaism. How was it typical/atypical in terms of belief, practise, and the constituency of its adherents and what was/were the main factor/s leading to schism?
4. What was the legacy of Alexander the Great in Asia? Discuss both political conditions and the representation of Alexander in literature.
5. To what extent do the sources allow the history of Muhammad's prophetic career and its Arabian context to be recovered?
6. How do you think the interest of the 'Abbāsid caliphs in developing a 'research culture' at court reflected political concerns about leadership?
7. What, besides widespread conversion to Islam, were the most significant changes and continuities in Iranian culture from the eighth to the tenth century?
8. What effect did the crises of the eleventh century have on the Jewish communities of the Genizah world?

END OF PAPER