

AETO
ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES TRIPOS PART IA

Middle Eastern Studies

Thursday 5 June 2014 09.00 – 12.00

Paper MES. 6

Introduction To The History And Culture Of The Middle East

Answer **three** of the following 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 Book x 3

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 To what extent are the physical geography, location and climate of the Middle East useful explanatory factors in the history of the region?

2 **Either** (a) What new elements were introduced into the Jewish polity during the reigns of David, Solomon and Josiah?

Or (b) Discuss some of the outstanding political/religious differences between the southern kingdom of Judah and the northern kingdom of Israel during the period of the Divided Monarchy.

3 Describe and discuss how religious attitudes impacted on the Achaemenid monarchs' internal and external political decisions.

4 **Either** (a) How typical of Umayyad rule was the Caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik?

Or (b) Describe relations between Arabia and the Late Antique world on the eve of Islam.

5 Why did caliphs invest in high culture such as literature, music, architecture and science? Answer with reference to either the 'Abbasids or the Umayyads of Cordoba.

6 **Either** (a) Explain the similarities and differences between the political systems established by the Saljuq Turks and the Mamluks.

Or (b) To what degree were the responses of Nur al-Din, Salah al-Din and Baybars to the Crusades similar and which ruler do you think was most successful in his dealings with the Latin Christians?

7 Discuss, with reference to the documents of the Cairo Genizah, how the status of Jews under Islam affected their everyday lives.

8 Discuss Shah Isma'il's political and religious decisions and how they impacted on Shah Tahmasp's reign.

END OF PAPER