



BOARD OF STUDIES
NEW SOUTH WALES

2011

HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE
EXAMINATION

WRITING BOOKLET

Examination

History Extension

Section	Part	Question Number
1		1

Date

3/11/11

Number of booklets
used for this question

1/3

Instructions

- Write your Centre Number and Student Number at the top of this page.
- In the boxes provided write the name and date of this examination, and the number(s) of the question(s) attempted in this booklet.
- If you have not attempted the question, you must still hand in the Writing Booklet, with the words 'NOT ATTEMPTED' written clearly on the front cover.
- Write using black or blue pen. (Black pen is recommended.)
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The writing ^{and study} of history has emerged as one of the greatest "cultural wonders of western civilisation". Over the years, controversial questions have ~~been~~ arisen in relation to the "owners" of history and the extent to which historians "own" history. The perspectives, aims and purposes of individual ~~the~~ historians will continue to remain the main influences on the writing of history and in turn, ultimately decide who really owns history, ^{as evident through Eric Foner's source, who owns history, and other historians through time.}

The source, "Who Owns History" presented by Eric Foner in 2002, ~~and~~ outlines how ~~individuals~~ ^{individuals} who read history will ultimately possess a differing stance to ^{each individual} ~~possess one~~ ~~the~~ reading the same literature as individuals along with historians are influenced by our own perspectives & biases. "the basic differences between historians' understanding of their task and what much broader public thinks the writing of history entails". Such brings to light the idea that the

historians view ~~the state~~ that

"searching for new perspectives" is what

However is pivotal to their roles as historians. ^{to be far different} general public contradict this view by believing the source examines how the construction

of history has evolved overtime, as Foner pinpoints with the emergence of "new information, new methodologies

political, social imperatives" he is

allowing us to grasp the essence of historiographical study, where overtime

approaches to history have altered. ^{and new views of the role, aim & purposes of history have emerged.} Through his ~~empirical, relativist~~ ^{post-modernist} views, Foner believed historical truth does

exist... but as a reasonable approximation of the past". A new way of

approaching historiography has emerged, travelling away from the old traditional methods, where Foner has accepted

"there often exists more than one

legitimate way of recounting past events" ^{Foner believes there is a relative truth in history which is ultimately based on one's perspective & methods used to construct the past}

Foner further believes that history should not be left to "the journalist

and the politician" meaning, it should ~~then~~ ^{only} comprise the task

of the historian to attempt to reconstruct the past ^{with the inclusion of a social history} ~~at ordinary individuals~~ where individuals from all ^{Additional writing space on back page. classes / ranks of society are}

included in historical study.
Social history and the importance of celebrating
everyone in the discourse of history is vital and
society tend to distort historical accounts.

allows the whole of society to be captured in history
through exaggerations or personal biases.
where everyone is able to men "own history" with each playing
Foner is attempting to delineate that role.

historians avoid these biases and
prejudices which come into play
when reconstructing the past, but these
ideas were of the past, now an emerging trend towards
social history has risen.

Nonetheless, Foner ultimately arrives
to the conclusion where he believes
history is owned by everyone, yet
by no-one, which is a complex
scenario. considering the past is constantly
changing and infinite ("never-ending").

A historian may within their own
perspective believe they own history,
yet it must include everyone,
hence no one is ever in control,

thereby leading to Foner's interpretation
that no-one owns history, yet with the
inclusion of everyone as part of the social history,
everyone can ultimately own history.

Herodotus was a Greek historian of the
5th century B.C, who recorded the
history of politics and war of his
country. His main aim and purpose
comprised of recording human
achievements for the posterity of

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future generations so they would have some knowledge of their ancestors and what happened in ~~Ancient~~ Greece at the time, "for their deeds may not be lost without glory".

Furthermore Herodotus recorded mainly accounts ~~using~~ of Greco-Persian wars which in his perspective were important at the ~~for~~ time. And

although Herodotus has been noted by ~~the~~ modern historians for having exaggerated some facts in his historical accounts, leading to "intellectual distortions" as portrayed by the source.

Koner believes it would have been a "serious mistake" if Herodotus were not to write about the history which he did as he "engaged forthrightly in public discourse", writing about people of the time and allowing future generations to gain knowledge of the politics & wars he wrote about.

However in the 19th century, ^{empirical} German Historian, Leopold Von Ranke engaged with a strict discipline for history, replacing it as the study of science and philosophy, to a single, separate, strict discipline, where his aim was to produce a "definitive and ~~accurate~~ ^{truthful} history of the world". Through employing only the ~~strictest~~ most critical and analytical scientific methods, and only through the use of "primary sources, eye witness accounts and the purest most immediate ~~for~~ document, avoiding reliance on secondary sources was one able to come to a truthful account of history. ^{Nonetheless} ~~this~~ The approach delivered by empiricist Ranke, one in direct contradiction to of Foner's as presented in the source however. Eric believes there is a truth which exists in history however this is only a "relative" truth, not an "absolute" truth which Ranke believes exist in history. ~~Ranke~~ Foner didn't believe in the "scientific sense" which Ranke's methods were centred upon

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hence conflicting interpretations of ~~the~~ historians owning history comes into play. In Ranke's view, after eradicating forgeries and falsifications from the historical records and employing only the most reliable and accurate of primary sources, a historian would be able to "own" history as their perspectives to be able to obtain an absolute truth would result in a definite and never changing history.

Keith Jenkins is an British post-modern historian of the 20th century and his perspectives on historiographical discourse, distinctly parallel those of Eric Foner. Post modern thinking emerged as a discipline which disregarded the old traditional ways/methods of approaching history and formed a new way of thinking. Post-modernists such as Keith Jenkins and Foner believed that a definite truth cannot be obtained through reconstructing the past as historians ~~do~~ when like labourers

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and history was their occupation.

Furthermore, Jenkins believed "history was a literary construct ... a verbal artefact... where history was as much invented as found". In essence Jenkins ~~argues~~ comes to the conclusion that history is influenced by a historian's biases and their stance / context, which ultimately ~~results~~ leads to what they write. Foner, accepts such a view and confirms "there often exists more than one legitimate way of recounting the past" hence differing interpretations are bound to emerge in history's reconstruction. And in the case of post-modern thinkers or Jenkins and Foner, the extent to which historians "own" history is highly limited as they are not in control of history as a whole, instead due to the varying interpretations of evidence which emerges, history continues to be constantly evolving & never-ending.

Eric Hobsbawm was a ^{British} Marxist historian of the 1900s and was much influenced by his communist ideologies. His historiographical stance was one which highly regarded social history and the inclusion of all classes of society into the construct of history. He believed history was an "intellectual project... which recorded the progress of society and the world", hence paralleling the views of Foner and Charles Adams, (speaker in the source), historians should "step outside the ivory tower and engage forthrightly in public discourse". Society as a whole, which in the view of Marxists to be classless, and include everyone from ~~the~~ both the upper and lower class continues to be as relevant today as when the social movement first began as affirmed by Foner. In this context, historians are unable to own

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history as it becomes something owned by everyone. As the whole of society is included in the discourse of social, Marxist history, it ultimately becomes owned by everyone who shares a part in it.

History is [^]constantly changing and ever-evolving discourse which will continue to raise as many questions as ~~they~~ ~~seem~~ to answer because varying perspectives and the context of differing historians will constantly come into play whereby they conflict in some circumstances or coincide in others. Ultimately the owners of history is based on one's perceptions and individualistic stance in relation to historiography, as some historians may be led to believe they can own history, whilst others come to terms that they never can or never will own history.

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