

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION IN THE HISTORY OF WOMEN AND GENDER
MODERN EUROPE AND SOUTH ASIA

This exam covers three fields of women's/gender history: Modern Europe, South Asia, and comparative. The questions are arranged in four groups, three of which cover the aforementioned fields, and a fourth which consists of "floaters"—questions which may be answered in terms of Modern Europe, South Asia, or as a comparison between the two regions. For each field, you may select from the designated group of questions or you may substitute one of the "floaters" and answer it in relation to that particular field. So, for example, for the South Asia field, you may select a question from section A or substitute one of the questions from section D, etc. Be sure to answer one question for each field and select questions that will allow you to cover a range of topics and historical perspectives. You will be expected to cite specific works and relevant historiographical debates in your essays. At the beginning of each essay, please note which question you are answering.

A. South Asia

1. Produce an analytic narrative of women in India for the 19th and 20th centuries. What women's issues shaped public debate during that period? To what extent is the story of women recoverable from the historiography of the tale of uppercaste Hindu women? What questions remain to be explored, and what stories remain unattended to?
2. Describe the project of subaltern studies and evaluate the extent to which its practitioners have considered gender and feminism as analytical categories.
3. Modernity has been a chief investigative modality for both colonialist and nationalist histories in South Asia. What challenges has feminist historiography from/about India made to the modernity/tradition model, especially where questions of public and private spheres are at issue?

B. Modern Europe

1. What difference does empire make to the study of European/national histories? What role has women's, gender and feminist scholarship had on the "imperial" turn in that historiography? What role should it play?
2. Women's movements have taken different forms in modern Europe, sometimes mobilizing autonomously, sometimes in coalition with other political and social movements. Identify the major strands of women's organization during this period, discussing their rhetorics, ideologies, and strategies, and assess their major achievements.
3. Discuss the impact of technological innovation and industrialization on women in terms of their work both inside and outside the home. How did women's economic and social roles, opportunities and status change as a result?

C. Comparative

1. Religion has played a significant though not always

predictable role in the lives of women. Compare the relationships between women and major religious movements in Europe and South Asia during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

2. The impact on women of advances in science, technology, and human knowledge in general has been ambiguous. Discuss women's role in the creation of knowledge, their access to education and avenues of expression, and the effects of "progress" on their everyday experience and life courses in South Asia and Modern Europe.

D. Floaters

1. What impact has women's/gender/feminist history had on national histories? Has there been a differential impact in specific historiographical traditions, and if so, why? What impact should these new histories have on national/ist narratives?

2. Does the linguistic turn mean the end of women's and social history as it was practiced in the 1970s and 1980s? What impact have cultural studies and post-colonial theory had on these fields, and to what extent have specific national historiographies followed suit?

