MODERN EUROPEAN SCIENCE

Write an essay on one topic from Part I and one from Part II (2 hours per question). Be specific about historical episodes and evidence and include reflections on the relevant historiography of the topic. Take care to avoid overlap in your choice of examples and evidence for your two essays.

Part I.

1. Does the source of funding have any impact on the kind of science that is produced? In your answer consider how different historians have viewed the question and use concrete historical examples to illustrate your argument. Consider different sources of funding and national differences.

2. Does ‘Science under the Nazis’ pose any particular challenges for historians? If so which are they? And have they changed over time? When answering the question consider the specific issues that might be involved for different communities as well as the questions involved for a historical understanding of science more generally.

Part II.

1. Contemporary historians of science have turned their attention especially to the materials, instruments, practices, and places of science, rather than only ideas. Drawing on particular works with which you are familiar, give an account of the value of this turn in historiography. For what sorts of issues is it particularly valuable? What kinds of problems does it avoid or remedy? Does it have weaknesses?

2. Why is it important to view scientists as social, political, and economic actors, both for the constitution of society and for the content of the sciences? Use particular historical works to make your case.