Answer ONE question from each of the following categories for a total of THREE answers. Good luck!

I. Religion and Identity
1) What sorts of challenges transformed the unified Church of Rome in 1500 into the many mutually exclusive churches of Western Europe in 1600 and beyond? How have scholars understood the relationship between the transformation of Western Christianity and the social, economic, and political development of early modern Europe?

2) Define the term “identity” and discuss its applicability to the early modern period. What types of identity existed; how were they created and transmitted; and how did they relate to each other? How did European expansion into the Atlantic impact the production and experience of identity in early modern Europe? Be sure to give concrete empirical examples as well as thematic and historiographic analysis.

II. Politics and Authority
1) Summarize the stakes and status of the debate on absolutism over the last twenty-five years or so. In your opinion, was there such a thing as “absolutism”? Why or why not? How do factors such as courts and court culture, patronage, gender, warfare, fiscality (and others you might identify) play into this question?

2) How has the concept of violence been a useful lens through which to explore pressures, processes, and changes in early modern society? Did Europe become less or more violent in the period under study and why?

III. Society and Economy
1. Discuss scholarship over the last thirty years in microhistory and the history of daily life. What have its proponents and practitioners promised about the benefits of these approaches? Is scholarship in microhistory and the history of daily life fulfilling these promises? Where do you see these two fields going?

2) How did the household economy, family structures, work, and consumption develop between 1450 and 1750 in Europe? How have scholars linked these issues (households, family structure, work, and consumption) to other key themes in the period, such as state formation, the Reformations, or European expansion?