

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION FOR PART I OF THE ORIENTAL
STUDIES TRIPOS

Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies

Friday 6 June 2008 13.30 – 16.30

**ARP.4 INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY AND CULTURE
OF THE MIDDLE EAST**

*Candidates should answer **three** questions, **one** from **each** section.*

*All questions carry **equal** marks.*

*Write your number **not** your name on the cover sheet of **each** Section booklet.*

STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS

20 Page Answer Book x 1

Rough Work Pad

**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.**

SECTION A

- 1 Discuss some of the geographical factors that distinguish the Middle East and suggest how these may have shaped the history of the region.
- 2 Examine the rise and development of Shi'ism as both a political and religious aspect of early Islam.
- 3 Compare and contrast the incorporation of the Iranian and the Turkish (Central Asian) peoples into the Islamic world, both in terms of the processes involved, and their consequences.

SECTION B

- 4 What were the main bases on which Islamic law was founded? How different were the four dominant law schools in their view of these sources?
- 5 Discuss some of the different genres of poetic writing in Arabic and Persian, and the main themes that the poets were interested in.
- 6 Explore the role of the patronage of art and architecture in the culture of the Middle East. Give some examples of the forms this creativity took.

SECTION C

- 7 Why is the place of women in society such a live issue in the Middle East today?
- 8 What forms did the impact of the West take on Middle Eastern societies from the 18th century onwards?
- 9 What are the most important issues at stake in relations between 'Islam' and 'the West' at the present time, and how have they arisen?

END OF PAPER