

ORIENTAL STUDIES TRIPOS Part II

Chinese Studies

Friday 29 May 2009 13.30 – 16.30

C.15 DYNASTIC CHINA: SPECIFIED SUBJECT

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions only.
All questions carry *equal* weight.

*Write your number **not** your name on the cover sheet of **each** Answer Book.*

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.**

Specified subject: Late Imperial Society

1. How did the Chinese “tribute system” change over the course of the Ming dynasty?
2. To what extent did the first seventy years of Ming rule represent a continuation of Mongol political culture under the Yuan?
3. What are the strengths and weaknesses in David Faure’s analysis of the Chinese lineage?
4. The Japanese historian of Chinese intellectual history Shimada Kenji has argued that the underlying weakness of Confucianism and neo-Confucianism was their lack of a folk religious base, so that the vast mass of illiterate people in China had little contact with the teachings of these schools of thought. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
5. Explain how Huizhou merchants succeeded in acquiring and maintaining their dominant position among merchant groups in south China during the Ming dynasty.
6. How did the Jiajing Emperor’s rule affect the fate of Buddhism and Buddhist establishments in late imperial China?
7. “The key to understanding neo-Confucian writings about the self lies in recognizing their distinction of the self from the individual.” Discuss.
8. What impact did changes in the constituency of the reading public have on the development of “a community of learning” in late imperial China?
9. How did villagers’ understanding of their village settlement rights change over the course of the Ming dynasty?
10. The *Jin ping mei*, the story of a merchant family, is essentially a commentary on Ming imperial politics. Discuss.

END OF PAPER