

ORIENTAL STUDIES TRIPOS Part II

Chinese Studies

---

Friday 30 May 2008 09.00 – 12.00

---

**C.15 DYNASTIC CHINA: SPECIFIED SUBJECT**

Candidates should attempt *three* questions from *one* section only.  
All questions are of *equal* value.

*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**  
**Early China**

*Candidates should answer three questions.*

1. Discuss the changing perceptions of illness as evinced in written evidence from Shang to Han.
2. Discuss how cosmology influenced Warring States and Han perceptions of the living species.
3. Compare and contrast Zhuangzi's views on change and transformation with cognate ideas expressed in *Ru* ("Classicist", "Confucian") texts in Warring States China.
4. Evaluate the impact of the model of the Five Phases (*wu xing* 五行) on Warring States and Han thought.
5. Discuss the role of sacrifice in Warring States and Han religion.
6. Discuss the relationship between politics and cosmology in early China.
7. How did Warring States and Han views of time inform ritual and religious practice?
8. Compare and contrast the use of argument and rhetoric in the *Zhuangzi* and in the writings of Wang Chong.
9. How useful is the notion of "popular religion" for the study of religion in early China.
10. A much-quoted line in a poem in the *Book of Odes* translates: "The Spirits are Drunk". Why should they be?

**SECTION B**  
**Late Imperial China**

*Candidates should answer three questions.*

1. How did Ming foreign policy change over the course of the first sixty years of the fifteenth century?
2. Was the Ming government, overall, “autocratic”? Why do you think so?
3. What were the main obstacles to the formation and growth of a community of learning in Ming China?
4. How did lineage organization change over the course of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries?
5. “The story of the *Jin ping mei* is lewd, but its moral is Confucian.” Discuss.
6. What are the strengths and weaknesses of Maurice Freedman’s analysis of the Chinese lineage?
7. To what extent was there a Buddhist revival at the end of the Ming?
8. To what extent was the growth of the Ming domestic economy caused by the import of foreign silver?
9. Explain how and why eunuchs acquired significant powers at the Ming court.
10. Ming technology, compared to earlier dynasties, is often thought to have stagnated. Do you agree? Why?

**END OF PAPER**