

ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES TRIPOS, PART IB

Chinese Studies

Tuesday 5 June 2012 9.00-12.00

C.7 THE HISTORY OF DYNASTIC CHINA

*Candidates should answer **three** questions, one from each section (A, B, C)*

*All questions are of **equal** value.*

*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

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

None

**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.**

A. Early China

1. How did the Chinese government's ritual change from the reign of the First Emperor of the Qin to the reign of Emperor Wu of the Han?
2. 'To Han Chinese, the difficulty of ruling the steppe was more one of ecological difference than military power or political differences.' Discuss
3. It is often said that during the Han dynasty cosmology was wrapped up in politics. How and why in the Later Han did this understanding unravel?
4. How was the notion of 'the Classics' formed, and what impact did this concept have on the development of Han philosophy?
5. What specifically Chinese features of an empire can be traced to practices established during the reign of the First Emperor of Qin?

B. Medieval China

6. How did changes in domestic conditions affect changes in foreign policy over the course of the Tang dynasty?
7. 'State ritual in the Tang is marked by members of the court assuming the roles of arbiter, actor, and onlooker, all in one.' Comment, especially as regards the development of Chinese politics.
8. It has been said that the most remarkable feature of the Tang aristocracy, seen from a non-Chinese perspective, was its institutional weakness. If you agree, how then did it last so long? If you disagree, then what were the sources of its strength?
9. How did the medieval court affect the development of Chinese calligraphic styles, from the end of the Han to the end of the Tang?
10. In what ways did large families in the Tang differ from their counterparts in later dynasties?

C. Late Imperial China

11. What important features of late imperial Chinese society are **not** treated in the *Honglou meng*? How does their absence affect your reading of this novel?

12. Max Weber famously argued that a major obstacle to the development of capitalism in China was Confucianism. Do you agree with his assessment? Why?
13. To what extent was the absence of a coherent, unified foreign policy towards its neighbouring states a key feature of China's foreign relations from the tenth century up to the nineteenth century?
14. In what important ways did Chinese book culture in the Ming differ from that in the Song?
15. 'Confucian ritual in late imperial times was concerned fundamentally with order, but, oddly enough, only occasionally with politics'. Comment.

END OF PAPER