

ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES TRIPOS, PART IB

Chinese Studies

Date 2013

Time

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 SPECIAL 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.**

A. Early China

1. A significant portion of classical philosophical discourse revolves around the idea of ruling the empire. Why was this so important? Were these ideas ever put into practice?
2. How did the Chinese script reflect the political and ideological changes from the Warring States period to the Qin-Han empires?
3. Discuss the concept of filial piety in early China. How did it change from pre-Qin to later times?
4. What were the main reasons for Qin and Han interest in the Western Regions?
5. What was the role of Han cosmology in funerary practices? How was it reflected in the material culture of burials?

B. Medieval China

1. Discuss the role of ritual in the legitimisation of the Tang dynasty.
2. What were the differences between the Tang court's attitude towards Buddhism and Taoism? Why?
3. Discuss the significance of Central Asia for the Tang empire during the first half of the dynasty.
4. According to David McMullen, "The Confucian canons occupied a central place in the intellectual life of Tang China." Discuss.
5. How was the examination system a positive force in the Tang dynasty? What were its shortcomings?

C. Late Imperial China

1. How did the history of book production and consumption change between the eleventh and seventeenth century?
2. How did uses of ritual in court practice change during the Ming dynasty?
3. Many sociologists have held that one mark of the modern state is its monopoly over a society's violence. What then are we to think of the late imperial state as depicted in the *Shuihu zhuan*?

4. How did successful merchant families use social and political institutions to pursue commerce in the Ming and Qing?
5. “A major problem for effective dynastic rule in later imperial times was the growing imbalance between China’s expanding linkage with other economies but its increasing isolation from other states.” Comment.

END OF PAPER