

ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES TRIPOS Part IA

East Asian Studies

---

Wednesday 8 June 2011

13.30-16.30

---

**EAS.1 EAST ASIAN STUDIES**

Answer **ONE** question from **EACH** section.  
*All questions are of equal value*

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

<b>STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS</b>
<i>20 Page Answer Book x 1</i>	<i>None</i>
<i>Rough Work Pad</i>	

**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 To what extent did geography shape the formation of the early Chinese empires?
- 2 What do the stele inscriptions of China's First Emperor celebrate?
- 3 In what ways did Confucianism inspire state ideology during Han times?
- 4 One pioneering study on the early centuries of Chinese Buddhism was entitled *The Buddhist Conquest of China*. Do you think that the notion of 'Buddhist Conquest' captures the essential processes of religious change in China from the Han to the Tang?
- 5 Why was Nara abandoned in 784?
- 6 How did China's civil service examination system make Ming and Qing dynasty society different from Japanese and Korean society during these centuries?
- 7 Discuss how the Choson period can be understood as a period of conflict within Neo-Confucianism. Be sure to discuss both the rise of Neo-Confucianism and its later breakdown.
- 8 What arguments can be brought to bear against the notion that Japan was a 'closed country' during the Edo period?
- 9 What features of Japanese rule in Korea contributed to the later division of the country? How much was Japanese imperialism to blame for the division?
- 10 'The Meiji Restoration was a result of both internal and external causes'. Discuss.
- 11 'China's post-Mao economic reforms have created more problems than they have solved'. Discuss.

## SECTION B

- 12 Compare and contrast how Korea and Japan responded to the introduction of Buddhism and/or Confucianism from China. What does this reveal about the dynamics of East Asian history?
- 13 What impact did early historiography in China have on the writing of history in Japan in the Nara and/or Heian periods?
- 14 How did Japanese imperialism shape the histories of China and Korea? Does it help to explain why strong communist movements developed in those two countries and not in Japan itself?

- 15 How did the Second World War affect, reshape and influence the regional balance and imbalance of East Asia?
- 16 What are the origins of the modern state in East Asia and how do Korea, Japan and China differ in their concepts and constructions of the state?
- 17 What are the tools of modernity that many Asian leaders believed were essential for their societies to move from traditional forms of economy and politics to more advanced forms? What sorts of beliefs were they questioning and why?

### SECTION C

Answer **EITHER** question 18 **OR** question 19

- 18 Comment on **TWO** of the following extracts from primary sources in translation, setting them in their historical contexts:

The edict of Emperor Wuzong (r. 841-6) on the suppression of Buddhism (845)

We have heard that up through the Three Dynasties the Buddha was never spoken of. It was only from the Han and the Wei on that the religion of idols gradually came to prominence. So in this latter age it has transmitted its strange ways, instilling its infection with every opportunity, spreading like a luxuriant vine, until it has poisoned the customs of our nation; gradually, and before anyone was aware, it beguiled and confounded men's minds so that the multitude have been increasingly led astray. It has spread to the hills and plains of all the nine provinces and through the walls and towers of our two capitals. Each day finds its monks and followers growing more numerous and its temples more lofty. It wears out the strength of the people with constructions of earth and wood, pilfers their wealth for ornaments of gold and precious objects, causes men to abandon their lords and parents for the company of teachers, and severs man and wife with its monastic decrees. In destroying law and injuring mankind, indeed, nothing surpasses this doctrine! Now if even one man fails to work the fields, someone must go hungry; if one woman does not tend her silkworms, someone will be cold. At present there are an inestimable number of monks and nuns in the empire, each of them waiting for the farmers to feed him and the silkworms to clothe him, while the public temples and private chapels have reached boundless numbers, all with soaring towers and elegant ornamentation sufficient to outshine the imperial palace itself.

De Bary and Bloom, *Sources of Chinese tradition*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1999, vol. 1, pp. 585-6.

(TURN OVER

Lü Kun (1536-1618) calls for a restoration of community schools

Ever since true education has deteriorated, the whole world has ceased to understand what book learning is all about. For more than two thousand years it has been misconceived, and right down to the present: what teachers have told their disciples and fathers have transmitted to their sons is only that they should come first in the (*jinshi*) examinations as a stepping-stone to wealth and rank. ... Instruction [in each community school] should begin with explanations of the Elementary learning (*Xiaoxue*) and the Classic of Filiality (*Xiaojing*), as well as the study of characters and keys to pronunciation. ... The best thing in the world is for young people to study - whether [they do so] for the lofty goals of achieving a reputation and accomplishing great deeds or for the modest aim of recognizing characters and understanding their meanings. There are some unenlightened parents who do not teach their children to read; the sons end up becoming evil men, with depraved minds and hearts and untamed natures; they turn into thieves and break the laws - all because of this [failure in education]. Have you ever seen anyone who understands principles and recognizes characters willing to become a thief?

De Bary and Bloom, *Sources of Chinese tradition*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1999, vol. 1, pp. 888-9.

Letter of Lin Zexu (1785-1850) to Queen Victoria (1839)

The kings of your honorable country by a tradition handed down from generation to generation have always been noted for their politeness and submissiveness. We have read your successive tributary memorials saying: 'In general our countrymen who go to trade in China have always received His Majesty the Emperor's gracious treatment and equal justice,' and so on. Privately we are delighted with the way in which the honorable rulers of your country deeply understand the grand principles and are grateful for the Celestial grace. For this reason the Celestial Court in soothing those from afar has redoubled its polite and kind treatment. The profit from trade has been enjoyed by them continuously for two hundred years. This is the source from which your country has become known for its wealth. But after a long period of commercial intercourse, there appear among the crowd of barbarians both good persons and bad, unevenly. Consequently there are those who smuggle opium to seduce the Chinese people and so cause spread of the poison to all provinces. Such persons who only care to profit themselves, and disregard their harm to others, are not tolerated by the laws of Heaven and are unanimously hated by human beings. His Majesty the Emperor, upon hearing of this, is in a towering rage. he has specially sent me, his commissioner, to come to Guangdong, and together with the governor-general and governor jointly to investigate and settle this matter

De Bary and Bloom, *Sources of Chinese tradition*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2000, vol. 2, pp. 202-3.

Opposition to the Korean alphabet from Ch'oe Malli (1444)

We humbly believe that the invention of the Korean script is a work of divine creation unparalleled in history. There are, however, some questionable issues we wish to raise for Your Majesty's consideration. Even since the founding of the dynasty, our court has pursued the policy of respecting the senior state with utmost sincerity and has consistently tried to follow the Chinese system of government. As we share with China at present the same writing and the same institutions, we are startled to learn of the invention of the Korean script. ... If this becomes known to China and anyone argues against it, it would disgrace our policy of respecting China. Although winds and soils vary from region to region, there has been no separate writing system of local dialects. Only such peoples as the Mongolians, Tanguts, Jürchens, Japanese, and Tibetans have their own writings. But this is a matter that involves the barbarians and is unworthy of our concern.

Lee, *Sourcebook of Korean civilization*, vol. 1, 1993, p. 519.

19 Comment on **TWO** of the following extracts from primary sources in translation, setting them in their historical contexts:

Toyotomi Hideyoshi's decree on the disarmament of the populace (1588)

The farmers of the various provinces are strictly forbidden by His Highness to have swords, daggers, bows, spears, firearms, or other kinds of weapons in their possession. The reason is as follows: Those who stockpile useless implements, evade the payment of rents and dues, plot to band together in leagues (*ikki*), and commit criminal actions against the recipients of fiefs must of course be punished. As a consequence, however, the fields lie fallow and the fief goes to waste. Hence the provincial lords, recipients of fiefs, and administrative deputies shall collect all such weapons and forward them to His Highness. The swords and daggers thus collected will not go to waste. They are to be made into nails and cramp irons for the Great Buddha building project recently begun by His Highness. Consequently the farmers will benefit not only in this world but even unto the world to come. As long as the farmers have agricultural tools and devote themselves exclusively to tilling the fields, they and the generations of their children and children's children will prosper. It is out of compassion with farmers that His Highness has issued these orders. This is truly the foundation of the country's security and the people's happiness.

De Bary *et al.*, *Sources of Japanese tradition*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, vol. 1, 2001, p. 346.

Extract from Fukuzawa Yukichi's (1835-1901) *An encouragement of learning* (1876)

It is said that heaven does not create one person above or below another person. This means that when people are born from heaven, they all are equal. There is no innate distinction between high and low. It means that people can freely and independently use the myriad things of the world to satisfy their daily needs

(TURN OVER)

through the labors of their own bodies and minds and that, as long as they do not infringe on the rights of others, may pass their days in happiness. ... Learning does not consist essentially of such impractical pursuits as studying obscure Chinese characters, reading ancient texts that are difficult to make out, or enjoying and writing poetry. These kinds of interests may be useful diversions, but they should not be esteemed as highly as the Confucian and Japanese Learning scholars have esteemed them since ancient times. Among the Chinese Learning scholars, those who have been skilled in practical matters have been few indeed. Rare also has been the merchant who, if well versed in poetry, was also successful in business. Consequently, we observe that when they see their own children concentrating on books, thoughtful merchants and peasants fear as good parents that they will eventually bring the family fortune to ruin. This is not without reason. And it proves that such forms of learning are ultimately without practical value and will not serve daily needs. ... The object of one's primary efforts should be practical learning that is closer to ordinary human needs. ... Geography is the guide to the climates of not only Japan but also the many countries of the world. Physics is the science that investigates the properties and functions of the myriad substances.

De Bary *et al.*, *Sources of Japanese tradition*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, vol. 2, 2005, pp. 761-2.

Yi Kangnyŏn's open letter to Itō Hirobumi (ca. 1908)

Although you are barbarians, you too have a monarch, subjects, and international agreements that you must observe. Under heaven, every nation has a monarch and subjects; and wherever a monarch and subjects are present, as you should know, there is morality. Our country is, unfortunately, adjacent to yours with whom we have had to establish diplomatic relations. A trade to exchange goods should have been sufficient. Yet you led your troops to invade our land, murdered our queen, humiliated our monarch, intimidated our government, exploited our finances, changed our customs, confounded our laws, and killed our people. ... have we asked to become a colony of your country, a nation devoid of morality? ... As an act of devotion and moral duty to our sovereign, we have raised our righteous banner, and the entire nation has responded. On land and at sea, there is a chain of our armed camps, and we have a strategy that promises victory after victory.

Lee, *Sourcebook of Korean civilization*, vol. 2, 1996, pp. 407-8.

**END OF PAPER**