

ORIENTAL STUDIES TRIPOS Part I

Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies

Monday 1 June 2009 09.00 – 12.00

IS.4 ARABIC LITERATURE, 1

*Candidates should answer **THREE** questions.
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.**

Candidates should attempt **three** of the following essay questions.

- 1) 'The biography of Muhammad cannot be written without the Qur'an.' Discuss.
- 2) Who is the audience of the Qur'an and how is the audience addressed?
- 3) From your reading of the Qur'an, discuss to what extent we should read the Qur'an as law, as literary text and/or as history?
- 4) Is the presence of narrative an indication of the literary character of the suras of the Qur'an which you have read? Give reasons for your answer.
- 5) Discuss whether the distinction of verses into *muhkamāt* and *mutashābihāt* (Q. 3:7) reflects the suras of the Qur'an which you have read.
- 6) To what extent is the 'Uthmanic recension of the Qur'an a closed corpus? Give reasons for your answer.
- 7) Contrast and compare medieval and modern approaches to the Qur'an.
- 8) Discuss E. Said's theory of Orientalism in terms of its applicability to Western studies of the Qur'an.
- 9) Account for the significance of the reader in modern approaches to the Qur'an and explain why some might find this controversial.

END OF PAPER