



AET1

Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Tripos, Part IB

Friday 29 May 2015 13.30 to 16.30 pm

Paper J9

Japanese society

Answer **three** questions, including at least **one** from **each** section. All questions carry **equal** marks.

Write your number **not** your name on the cover sheet of **each** answer booklet.

STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS

20 page answer booklet

Rough Work Pad

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS TO BE SUPPLIED FOR THIS EXAMINATION

None

You may not start to read the questions printed on the subsequent pages of this question paper until instructed to do so.

SECTION A

1. What is *Nihonjinron*? Explain the term and provide at least two examples from classic studies of Japanese society.
2. The official stance in Japan has long been that it is a homogeneous society. Today, even the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) government promotes a 'multicultural' society. Discuss in what ways Japan can be regarded as homogenous, in what ways diverse and analyse why the government promotes a multicultural society.
3. How do people interact within urban space in Japan? How do they create community and maintain privacy? Discuss specific examples in EITHER communal areas such as neighbourhoods or tsunami evacuation shelters OR public places.

SECTION B

4. What are the different functions of a family? Compare post-war Japanese families with historical family models when discussing how families fulfil these functions.
5. On 31 December 2014, the Japanese Ministry of Labor, Health and Welfare announced that Japan had experienced the biggest natural population decline in its history (ca. 268,000 people in 2014). Discuss the implications of this decline, the government's measures to address the trend of decreasing population, whether they work and why.
6. Discuss what social barriers and silent pressures exist in Japanese society for gay, lesbian and transgender people, respectively.
7. What are the values and manners Japanese children have to learn? How are these values and manners taught at home, in pre-school and school?

8. In recent years, researchers have observed a trend of Japanese women 'defecting' from traditional life-courses. Discuss what these 'traditional life-courses' are, and provide at least two examples of trajectories that 'defecting' women in Japanese society may choose to escape from them.
9. The career-oriented salaryman is usually regarded as the normative Japanese worker. However, a large number of Japanese men do not belong to this category. Describe three different jobs for men in Japan who do not belong to this normative category and elaborate how these men can achieve or fail to achieve a sense of masculinity through their work.
10. In Japanese popular culture, the term *sei-tenkan* (sex change) is sometimes used to describe the promotion of women working in large companies. Describe the work situation this term refers to and explore the various ways female office workers are supported or face obstacles in their career advancement.

END OF PAPER