

Spring 1998

**Preliminary Examination
Modern China**

Answer **three** of the following questions with historiographical interpretations.

1. World War II in China (The War of Resistance Against Japan) has become a heated topic in the field. Evaluate the recent historiography on the war.
2. Student demonstrators in Tiananmen in 1989 saw themselves as the heirs of May Fourth Enlightenment. Was this comparison valid? And based on this comparison, discuss the role of intellectual culture, democracy, nationalism, radical politics in modern Chinese history.
3. Discuss the Communist movement from 1921 to 1949 in light of the new scholarship on it.
4. Marginal groups and popular cultures--e.g., women, prostitute, urban poors, collaborators, films, cartoons, drama--have figured prominently in recent Chinese historical scholarship. Evaluate this shift of approaches.
5. Evaluate the *impact* of Paul Cohen's and Pransenjit Duara's historiographical challenges on the studies of Chinese history in the U.S.

Spring 1996

Preliminary Examination
Chinese History
(Chow/Ebrey)

Please write on *four* of the following questions. Frame your answers in such a way as to demonstrate your command of Chinese history and the English-language scholarship on it.

1. From the perspective of Europe, in the 17th and 18th centuries, the autocratic power of the imperial bureaucracy of China appeared overwhelming. To what extent is this view accurate? How deeply did the imperial state penetrate local society in late imperial China?
2. Would it be possible to write a history of local organization in China from the Song through the Qing dynasties? What sorts of materials could be used as evidence? What sort of work has been done so far?
3. Max Weber has observed that "for twelve centuries social rank in China has been determined more by qualification for office than by wealth." Was the elite status the gentry obtained through the civil service examination an adequate basis for perpetuating their power in the Ming-Qing period?
4. How would you characterize the development of the Chinese elite from Han through Song times? Are there any major continuities, any major changes or turning points?
5. "The Qing is without doubt the most successful dynasty of conquest in Chinese history, and the key to its success was the adoption by early Manchu rulers of a policy of systematic sinicization." Please assess this statement and discuss the differences between Mongol and Manchu rule in China.
6. What explains the dramatic population growth in late imperial China? Was the increase in food output the main factor? Were other factors also important?
7. How would you characterize the main differences between Tang Confucianism and the Neo-Confucianism of the Song period?
8. Did Confucianism shift its focus from philosophy to philology in the Ch'ing period? How would you explain intellectual change from the late Ming through the mid-Ch'ing period?

