

南洋初級學院
Nanyang Junior College



中國通識
China Studies in English

JC2 Preliminary Examination 2008

CHINA STUDIES H1
China Studies in English

8817

DURATION 3 hours

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

All answers must be fully in English, with Chinese terms Romanised. The use of Chinese characters is **not permitted**.

Write your name and Civics Tutorial group in the spaces provided on the answer paper.

Answer Question 1, Question 2, and Question 3. Note that for Questions 2 and 3, you shall answer either part of each question, but not both.

Tie and submit all answers together at the end of the examination.

Write your answers on the separate answer paper provided.
If you use more than one sheet of paper, fasten the sheets together.

You are reminded to be punctilious in your use of proper English, and veracious in the presentation of your answers.

This question paper consists of 4 printed pages

SECTION A: CASE STUDY

THE PROBLEM OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION

1. Read the sources and then answer the questions.

Source A

Due to the existing Hukou System, those surplus rural labourers had to establish their own non-agricultural enterprises in or near their villages and townships, which are therefore called township/village enterprises (TVEs). In the 1980s TVEs played a significant part in transferring rural labour to non-agricultural sectors at the local level, during which the number of rural labourers who got into TVEs from farming increased from 29.99 million in 1980 to 92.65 million in 1990. But the capacity of TVEs will not be able to absorb all the surplus rural labour. From 1990 to 1994, on average there were only 0.12–0.14 persons in each rural household working in the TVEs; in the meantime there were about 2.87 full- or part-time labourers in each rural household. More than 2.7 labourers have to either stay in the farming fields or go out of their villages or townships for non-agricultural jobs.

From a publication by the United Nations' UNESCO, 2003.

Source B

The migrants, estimated at between 80 and 110 million, are the muscle of the economy. They can be seen any day in east coast cities, walking along highways, squatting in construction crews, arriving from interior villages no one has heard of. Most work at least 28 days a month; between 50 and 70 percent of them will send their pay, called remittances, back to the family. The money is used to help build a house, to get aging parents off the farm, to make sure that a brother can continue to study at local schools that lately require tuition, or to finance a small shop. "Without migrants, the whole structure would collapse," says one China specialist. "They staff the shops, restaurants, factories, construction. It all depends on migrants."

From the article "China's Peasants Opt For Urban Grindstone" by Robert Marquand, January 2004.

Source C

The household registration system has been supplemented by a proliferation of other forms of policing and regulation. This includes the requirement that migrants have an identity card, a temporary residence permit, a medical certificate, a registration card for the temporary employment of emigrants, and, for women of child-bearing age, a marriage and childbearing permit. Further, migrants are generally charged a range of fees and taxes, some of them legal and some not. Finally, all large cities place restrictions on the trades and occupations that may be undertaken by migrants, and periodic campaigns are run by the police to limit the number of migrants coming into cities, or to round up migrants, especially those without employment, and send them back to the countryside.

From "Intersections: Gender, History and Culture in the Asian Context", September 2000.

Source D

The new push to eliminate the hukou system was cut short amid other economic initiatives. In the mid-1990s, Beijing began reforming the state-owned enterprises (SOEs), seeking to reduce the redundancies of enterprises built up over the previous two decades. The SOEs were unprofitable, becoming a drain on state coffers and on more solid economic growth. The dinosaurs of industry also were blocking innovation and development of China's own intellectual resources, since there was little or no pressure to be creative or even competitive. These reforms, implemented in fits and starts, led to a new wave of urban unemployment – and the first group to face blame for the unemployment were migrant labourers. Already treated as second-class citizens, social discrimination against them increased, and city governments once again began blocking the flow of migrants and shipping them back to their home provinces.

Though some hukou reforms started as experiments in various cities and provinces, Beijing pressed for the development of rural cities to absorb the ever-increasing pool of surplus rural labour – but with only minimal success. Beijing also sought to direct migrants to the inland cities, like Chongqing, that were more accommodating to migrants. Efforts also were made to urbanise select rural areas, creating cities by massing the rural population together in an effort to keep rural forces in the interior rather than heading to the coast. But none of these fully addressed the rising numbers of surplus rural labour. The allure of the cities was too strong. By the turn of the century, the construction booms in the coastal cities and the continued rise of exports drew in the rural labourers. The expansion of service industry in the cities to satiate the expanding middle class also created a vacuum the rural labourers could fill.

From “China – Rural Migration and Plugging the Rural-Urban Gap”, August 2008.

Now answer all of the following four sub-questions:

- a) With reference to the sources, why does labour migrate from rural parts of China to urban areas? [4]
- b) Of what value are Sources A and B in showing that rural-urban migration is a necessary process in China? [6]
- c) With reference to Sources C and D, and to your own knowledge, how serious has the Chinese government been in handling the rural-urban migration issue? [8]
- d) You are an independent economic advisor engaged by the Chinese government to make recommendations for the management of China's rural-urban migration, in particular dealing with its social and economic consequences. Using information from Sources A–D, and your own knowledge, what recommendations would you make, and why? [12]

SECTION B: ESSAY QUESTIONS

Answer both questions in this section, but for each, choose only one option.

2. How far have modernisation and globalisation changed what it means to be “Chinese” today?

OR

Do cross-straits tensions with Taiwan constitute a serious challenge to the political stability of the People’s Republic?

3. How seriously is the Chinese government addressing concerns over pollution and environmental degradation in China?

OR

“China’s emergence as a global power has been as a friendly dragon, helping many yet hurting few, and leaving all the better for it.” Discuss this statement.