

TEMASEK JUNIOR COLLEGE
JC 2 PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT 2017

HIGHER 1



CHINA STUDIES IN ENGLISH

8628/1

Friday, 25 August 2017

3 hours

No Additional Materials are required.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name and CG on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.

Start each answer on a fresh piece of writing paper.

You may use a soft pencil for any diagrams, graphs or rough working.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Section A

Answer all questions

Section B

Answer **two** questions. Answer **either** question 2 **or** question 3 and **either** question 4 **or** question 5.

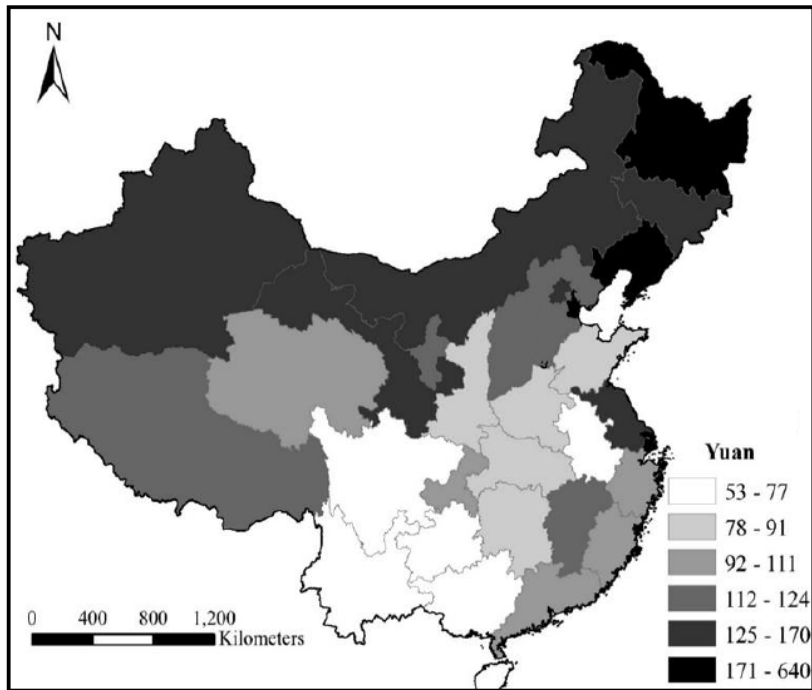
At the end of the examination, fasten the answer scripts securely together.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

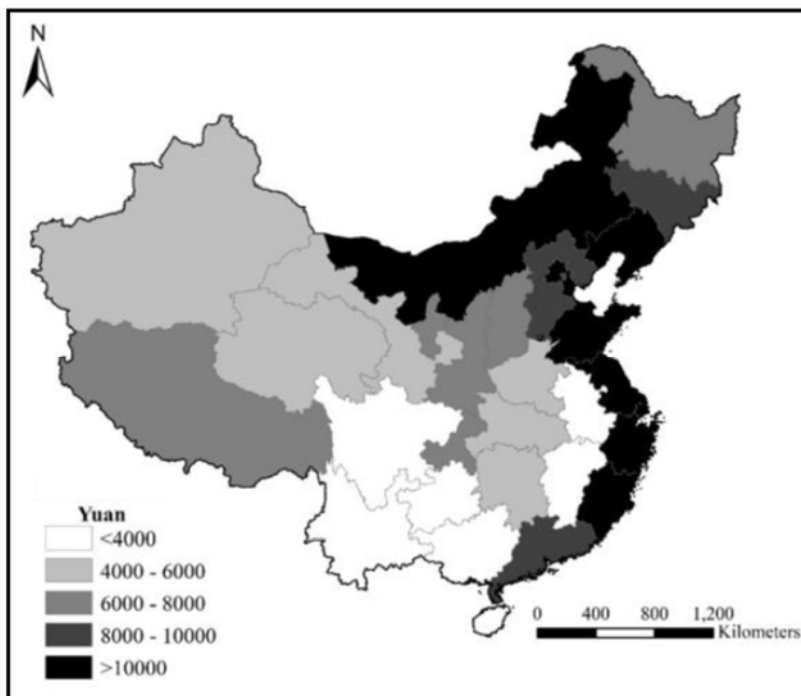
You are reminded of the need for good English and clear handwriting in your answer.

Inequality in China

Source A



GDP Per Capita 1952



GDP Per Capita 2013

- Data from the National Bureau of Statistics 1952-2013.

Source B

Communist China has one of the world's highest levels of income inequality, with the richest 1 per cent of households owning a third of the country's wealth, a report from Peking University has found. The poorest 25 per cent of Chinese households own just 1 per cent of the country's total wealth, the study found. China's Gini coefficient for income, a widely used measure of inequality, was 0.49 in 2012, according to the report. The World Bank considers a coefficient above 0.40 to represent severe income inequality.

The figures are notably higher than official estimates. China's statistics bureau said last year that the country's Gini coefficient had fallen slightly to 0.469 in 2014 from 0.477 in 2011. Another estimate by widely respected economists at the Southwest University of Finance and Economics in Chengdu put the Gini coefficient at 0.61 in 2010. The latest report is based on a survey of nearly 15,000 households in 25 different provinces. Separately, the Hurun Report said on Thursday that the number of dollar millionaires in China had risen 8 per cent over the past year to 3.14m. According to Hurun's 2015 China Rich List, the country is home to 596 dollar billionaires, more than the US.

- Excerpts from the Financial Times, 2016.

Source C

Ethnic minorities in China do have grievances, especially those in the central and western areas because they tend to perceive themselves as the most disadvantaged in the country. In comparison with the Han majority, the minority groups are less satisfied with their life, feel less happy, trust the government less, are less likely to perceive responsiveness of the government and hold stronger belief that the current political system need to be reformed in a fast way.

Ethnic minorities in the western provinces are the least happy group in the country. While the Chinese government has invested heavily in the minority areas with the intention of improving the economic wellbeing of the natives, income gaps between the Han and other groups are still prevalent. These gaps, as argued by many, are one of the major reasons underlying ethnic tensions in Tibet and Xinjiang. Although both the Han and the minorities feel they are better off, the minority people in the central and western regions perceive lesser gains in welfare than their Han counterparts. As long as grievances exist, national integration of different groups remains an unenviable task for the Chinese government. Only when minority people become equally satisfied and happy in life as their Han fellows can different people live in harmony and peace within the multi-ethnic state of China.

- Excerpts from a study by a Singapore-based scholar, 2011.

Source D

Commentators are right to say that Chinese economic inequality is severe. As Deng foreshadowed when he observed that “some people must get rich first,” the reform period has created dramatic economic inequality. Yet studies of attitudes amongst rural, low-income Chinese reveal a fascinating twist: rural Chinese don’t seem particularly bothered by economic inequality. Based on interviews with citizens across rural China, farmers stand out as a group least likely to express critical and fatalistic views of the Chinese system.

How can this be? As it turns out that, when rural Chinese think about their standard of living, they compare it not to coastal China, but, instead to their standard of living in the pre-reform period. So while it’s true that low-income rural farmers have not gained as much from the reform period as China’s business class, they gained far more than any other social constituency from escaping the Mao era. The reform period has created a highly unequal China, but a majority of Chinese attribute inequality mainly to hard work and merit. More Chinese citizens believe that the economic system under which they live is fairer than its counterparts. The vision of a “harmonious society” has been more successful than those whose views are informed solely by China’s Gini coefficient believe.

Just as regional disparities and social cleavages will likely disappoint as vehicles for the “coming collapse of China,” so will the country’s much publicized ethnic tensions. If the institutions of control do not face any serious challenge from the Han majority, why would the minorities present a credible threat, particularly when these groups lag in access to wealth and political influence? While minority discontent may present security problems in some areas, there is no real prospect of it catalysing regional separation, let alone destabilizing the Party-state’s national authority. Apart from the Tibetans, Uyghurs, and arguably the Mongols, none of China’s minorities show signs of widespread or sustained unrest.

- *Excerpts from The Diplomat, 2017.*

Section A: Answer all questions

- a) With reference to Source A, suggest and explain the reasons for the changes in income distribution in China between 1952 and 2013. [6]
- b) Using Sources C and D, and your own knowledge, assess the impact of inequality on China’s stability. [9]
- c) Using the sources and your knowledge, evaluate the extent of inequality in Chinese society and make recommendations on how the government can respond to enhance equity. [15]

Section B – Essay Questions

Answer two questions from this section

EITHER

2. How secure is the Communist Party's rule in China? [25]

OR

3. How successful has the Chinese government been in meeting the demands of a rapidly growing civil society? [25]

AND EITHER

4. How far would you agree that China's foreign policy is shaped by popular nationalism? [25]

OR

5. "China's approach to international relations has always been about seeking 'win-win' cooperation." Discuss. [25]