

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

University of London

EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

For the following qualifications :-

M.A.

**M.A. English: Renaissance to Enlightenment 1. Literature and Ideas
(written paper)**

COURSE CODE : ENGLRE01

DATE : 09-MAY-02

TIME : 10.00

TIME ALLOWED : 3 hours

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TURN OVER

MA ENGLISH: RENAISSANCE TO ENLIGHTENMENT

Literature and Ideas

Answer two questions, one from Section A and one from Section B.
Candidates must not present substantially the same material in any two answers
whether in this paper or in other parts of the examination.

SECTION A

Write about one of the following passages in any way you find interesting. You
should take account both of particular contexts and of what the passage suggests
about the ideas you have encountered during the course.

TURN OVER

And on top of all this, please heaven, that famous saying of Plato's is always quoted: "Happy the states where either philosophers are kings or kings are philosophers!" But if you look at history you'll find that no state has been so plagued by its rulers as when power has fallen into the hands of some dabbler in philosophy or literary addict. The two Catos are sufficient proof of this, I think, when one of them was a disturber of the peace of the republic with his crazy denunciations, and the other showed his wisdom by defending the liberty of the Roman people, but in doing so completely destroyed it. Then there are the families of Brutus and Cassius, the Gracchi brothers and even Cicero himself, who was just as much a scourge to the republic of Rome as Demosthenes was to Athens. As for Marcus Aurelius, we have to admit that he was a good emperor, but I could still deny him this distinction on the grounds that he was unpopular and disliked amongst his subjects for the very reason that he was so much of a philosopher. And even admitted that he was good, he undoubtedly did more harm to Rome by leaving such a son as his than he ever benefited it by his administration. In fact this type of man who is devoted to the study of wisdom is always most unlucky in everything, and particularly when it comes to procreating children; I imagine this is because Nature wants to ensure that the evil of wisdom shall not spread further throughout mankind. So it's well known that Cicero had a degenerate son, and the children of the great sage Socrates himself took after their mother rather than their father, as someone put it rather well: meaning, they were fools.

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Erasmus *The Praise of Folly*

CONTINUED

[Wind horns.] Enter Marcus from hunting to Lavinia

MARCUS

Who is this—my niece that flies away so fast?
 Cousin, a word. Where is your husband?
 If I do dream, would all my wealth would wake me.
 If I do wake, some planet strike me down
 That I may slumber an eternal sleep. 5
 Speak, gentle niece, what stern ungentle hands
 Hath lopped and hewed and made thy body bare
 Of her two branches, those sweet ornaments
 Whose circling shadows kings have sought to sleep in,
 And might not gain so great a happiness 10
 As half thy love. Why dost not speak to me?
 Alas, a crimson river of warm blood,
 Like to a bubbling fountain stirred with wind,
 Doth rise and fall between thy rosèd lips,
 Coming and going with thy honey breath. 15
 But sure some Tereus hath deflowered thee
 And, lest thou shouldst detect him, cut thy tongue.
 Ah, now thou turn'st away thy face for shame,
 And notwithstanding all this loss of blood,
 As from a conduit with three issuing spouts, 20
 Yet do thy cheeks look red as Titan's face
 Blushing to be encountered with a cloud.
 Shall I speak for thee? Shall I say 'tis so?
 O that I knew thy heart, and knew the beast,
 That I might rail at him to ease my mind! 25
 Sorrow concealèd, like an oven stopped,
 Doth burn the heart to cinders where it is.
 Fair Philomel, why she but lost her tongue
 And in a tedious sampler sewed her mind.
 But, lovely niece, that mean is cut from thee. 30
 A craftier Tereus, cousin, hast thou met,
 And he hath cut those pretty fingers off
 That could have better sewed than Philomel.
 O, had the monster seen those lily hands
 Tremble like aspen leaves upon a lute 35
 And make the silken strings delight to kiss them,
 He would not then have touched them for his life.
 Or had he heard the heavenly harmony
 Which that sweet tongue hath made,
 He would have dropped his knife and fell asleep, 40
 As Cerberus at the Thracian poet's feet.
 Come, let us go and make thy father blind,
 For such a sight will blind a father's eye.
 One hour's storm will drown the fragrant meads:
 What will whole months of tears thy father's eyes? 45
 Do not draw back, for we will mourn with thee.
 O, could our mourning ease thy misery! *Exeunt*

William Shakespeare *Titus Andronicus*

TURN OVER

3.

Chorus:

Nought so happie haplesse life
in this world as freedome findes:
nought wherin more sparkes are rife
to inflame couragious mindes.
but if force must us inforce
5 needes a yoke to undergo,
under foraine yoke to go,
still it proves a bondage worse,
and doubled subjection
10 see we shall, and feele, and know
subject to a stranger growne.

From hence forward for a King,
whose first being from this place
should his brest by nature bring
care of country to imbrace,
15

We at surly face must quake
of some *Romaine* madly bent:
who our terrour to augnent
his *Proconsuls* axe will shake,
20 driving with our Kings from hence
our establish'd government,
justice sword, and lawes defence.

Nothing worldly of such might
but more mighty *Destiny*,
25 by swift *Times* unbridled flight,
makes in end his end to see.
Every thing *Time* overthrowes,
nought to end doth steadfast staie.
his great sithe mowes all away
30 as the stalke of tender rose.
onely immortalitie
of the heavens doth it oppose
gainst his powrefull *Deitie*.

One day there will come a day
which shall quaile thy fortunes flower
35 and thee ruinde low shall laie
in some barbarous Princes power,
when the pittie-wanting fire
shall, O *Rome*, thy beauties burne,
and to humble ashes turne
40 thy proud wealth and rich attire,
those guilt roofes which turretwise,
justly making envy mourne,
threaten now to pearce Skies.

As thy forces fill each land
45 harvest making here and there,
reaping all with ravening hand
they find growing any where:
from each land so to thy fall
multitudes repaire shall make,
50 from the common spoile to take
what to each mans share may fall.
fingred all thou shalt behold:
no iote left for tokens sake
55 that thou wert so great of olde.

Like unto the ancient *Troie*
whence deriv'd thy founders be,
conqu'ring foe shall thee enjoie,
and a burning praie in thee.
60 for within this turning ball
this we see, and see each daie:
all things fixed ends do staie,
ends to first beginnings fall.
& that nought, how strong or strange
65 chaungeles doth endure alwaie,
but endureth fatall change.

Mary Sidney *The Tragedie of Antonie*

CONTINUED

1

THE waies, through which my weary steps I
guyde,
In this delightfull land of Faery,
Are so exceeding spacious and wyde,
And sprinkled with such sweet variety,
Of all that pleasant is to eare or eye, 5
That I nigh rauisht with rare thoughts delight,
My tedious trauell doe forget thereby ;
And when I gin to feele decay of might,
It strength to me supplies, and chears my dulled
spright.

2

Such secret comfort, and such heauenly
pleasures, 10
Ye sacred imps, that on *Parnasso* dwell,
And there the keeping haue of learnings
threasures,
Which doe all worldly riches farre excell,
Into the mindes of mortall men doe well,
And goodly fury into them infuse ; 15
Guyde ye my footing, and conduct me well
In these strange waies, where neuer foote
did vse,
Ne none can find, but who was taught them by
the Muse.

3

Reuele to me the sacred nursery
Of vertue, which with you doth there re-
maine, 20
Where it in siluer bowre does hidden ly
From view of men, and wicked worlds dis-
daine.
Since it at first was by the Gods with paine
Planted in earth, being deriu'd at first
From heauenly seedes of bounty soueraine, 25
And by them long with carefull labour
nurst,
Till it to ripenesse grew, and forth to honour
burst.

4

Amongst them all growes not a fayrer flowre,
Then is the bloosme of comely courtesie,
Which though it on a lowly stalke doe bowre, 30
Yet brancheth forth in braue nobilitie,
And spreads it selfe through all ciuillitie :
Of which though present age doe plenteous
seerne,
Yet being matcht with plaine Antiquitie,
Ye will them all but fayned showes esteerne, 35
Which carry colours faire, that feeble eies
misdeeme.

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But in the triall of true courtesie,
Its now so farre from that, which then it was,
That it indeed is nought but forgerie,
Fashion'd to please the eies of them, that pas, 40
Which see not perfect things but in a glas :
Yet is that glasse so gay, that it can blynd
The wisest sight, to thinke gold that is bras.
But vertues seat is deepe within the mynd,
And not in outward shows, but inward thoughts
defynd. 45

6

But where shall I in all Antiquity
So faire a patterne finde, where may be seene
The goodly praise of Princely courtesie,
As in your selfe, O soueraine Lady Queene, 50
In whose pure minde, as in a mirrour sheene,
It shows, and with her brightnesse doth
inflame
The eyes of all, which thereon fixed beene ;
But meriteth indeede an higher name :
Yet so from low to high vplifted is your name.

7

Then pardon me, most dreaded Soueraine, 55
That from your selfe I doe this vertue bring,
And to your selfe doe it returne againe :
So from the Ocean all riuers spring,
And tribute backe repay as to their King.
Right so from you all goodly vertues well 60
Into the rest, which round about you ring,
Faire Lords and Ladies, which about you dwell,
And doe adorne your Court, where courtesies
excell.

Edmund Spenser *The Faerie Queene*

TURN OVER

It is true, that certain living creatures, as Bees, and Ants, live sociably one with another, (which are therefore by *Aristotle* numbred amongst Politicall creatures;) and yet have no other direction, than their particular judgements and appetites; nor speech, whereby one of them can signifie to another, what he thinks expedient for the common benefit: and therefore some man may perhaps desire to know, why Man-kind cannot do the same. To which I answer,

Why certain creatures without reason, or speech, do nevertheless live in Society, without any coercive Power.

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First, that men are continually in competition for Honour and Dignity, which these creatures are not; and consequently amongst men there ariseth on that ground, Envy and Hatred, and finally Warre; but amongst these not so.

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Secondly, that amongst these creatures, the Common good differeth not from the Private; and being by nature enclined to their private, they procure thereby the common benefit. But man, whose Joy consisteth in comparing himselfe with other men, can relish nothing but what is eminent.

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Thirdly, that these creatures, having not (as man) the use of reason, do not see, nor think they see any fault, in the administration of their common businesse: whereas amongst men, there are very many, that thinke themselves wiser, and abler to govern the Publique, better than the rest; and these strive to reforme and innovate, one this way, another that way; and thereby bring it into Distraction and Civill warre.

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Fourthly, that these creatures, though they have some use of voice, in making knowne to one another their desires, and other affections; yet they want that art of words, by which some men can represent to others, that which is Good, in the likenesse of Evill; and Evill, in the likenesse of Good; and augment, or diminish the apparent greatnesse of Good and Evill; discontenting men, and troubling their Peace at their pleasure.

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Fiftly, irracionall creatures cannot distinguish betweene *Injury*, and *Dammage*; and therefore as long as they be at ease, they are not offended with their fellowes: whereas Man is then most troublesome, when he is most at ease: for then it is that he loves to shew his Wisdome, and controule the Actions of them that governe the Common-wealth.

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Lastly, the agreement of these creatures is Naturall; that of men, is by Covenant only, which is Artificiall: and therefore it is no wonder if there be somewhat else required (besides Covenant) to make their Agreement constant and lasting; which is a Common Power, to keep them in awe, and to direct their actions to the Common Benefit.

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Thomas Hobbes *Leviathan*

CONTINUED

55 Here she beholds the Chaos dark and deep,
 Where nameless Somethings in their causes sleep,
 'Till genial Jacob, or a warm Third day,
 Call forth each mass, a Poem, or a Play:
 How hints, like spawn, scarce quick in embryo lie,
 60 How new-born nonsense first is taught to cry,
 Maggots half-form'd in rhyme exactly meet,
 And learn to crawl upon poetic feet.
 Here one poor word an hundred clenches makes,
 And ductile dulness new meanders takes;
 65 There motley Images her fancy strike,
 Figures ill pair'd, and Similies unlike.
 She sees a Mob of Metaphors advance,
 Pleas'd with the madness of the mazy dance:
 How Tragedy and Comedy embrace;
 70 How Farce and Epic get a jumbled race;
 How Time himself stands still at her command,
 Realms shift their place, and Ocean turns to land.
 Here gay Description Aegypt glads with show'rs,
 Or gives to Zembla fruits, to Barca flow'rs;
 75 Glitt'ring with ice here hoary hills are seen,
 There painted vallies of eternal green,
 In cold December fragrant chaplets blow,
 And heavy harvests nod beneath the snow.
 All these, and more, the cloud-compelling Queen
 80 Beholds thro' fogs, that magnify the scene.
 She, tinsel'd o'er in robes of varying hues,
 With self-applause her wild creation views;
 Sees momentary monsters rise and fall,
 And with her own fools-colours gilds them all.

55-6.] That is to say, unformed things, which are either made into Poems or Plays, as the Booksellers or the Players bid most. These lines allude to the following in Garth's Dispensary, Cant. vi: 'Within the chambers of the globe they spy / The beds where sleeping vegetables lie, / 'Till the glad summons of a genial ray / Unbinds the glebe, and calls them out to day.'

63.] It may not be amiss to give an instance or two of these operations of *Dulness* out of the Works of her Sons, celebrated in the Poem. A great Critic formerly held these clenches in such abhorrence, that he declared 'he that would pun would pick a pocket.' Yet Mr. Dennis's works afford us notable examples in this kind: '*Alexander Pope* hath sent abroad into the world as many *Bulls* as his namesake *Pope Alexander*. — Let us take the initial and final letters of his Name, viz. *A. P—E*, and they give you the idea of an *Ape*. — *Pope* comes from the Latin word *Popa*, which signifies a little Wart; or from *poppysma*, because he was continually *popping* out squibs of wit, or rather *Popysmata*, or *Popisms*.' DENNIS ON *Hom.* and Daily Journal, June 11, 1728.

64.] A parody on a verse in Garth, Cant. I: 'How ductile matter new meanders takes.'

70-72.] Allude to the transgressions of the *Unities* in the Plays of such poets. For the miracles wrought upon *Time* and *Place*, and the mixture of Tragedy and Comedy, Farce and Epic, see Pluto and Proserpine, Penelope, etc. if yet extant.

73.] In the lower Aegypt Rain is of no use, the overflowing of the Nile being sufficient to impregnate the soil. — These six verses represent the Inconsistencies in the descriptions of poets, who heap together all glittering and gawdy images, though incompatible in one season, or in one scene.

See the Guardian, No. 40. parag. 6. See also *Eusden's* whole works, if to be found. It would not have been unpleasant to have given Examples of all these species of bad writing from these Authors, but that it is already done in our Treatise of the *Bathos*. SCRIBL.

79.] From Homer's Epithet of Jupiter, νεφεληγερέτα Ζεὺς.

TURN OVER

'Thus it is,' said Nekayah, 'that philosophers are deceived. There are a thousand familiar disputes which reason never can decide; questions that elude investigation, and make logic ridiculous; cases where something must be done, and where little can be said. Consider the state of mankind, and inquire how few can be supposed to act upon any occasions, whether small or great, with all the reasons of action present to their minds. Wretched would be the pair above all

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names of wretchedness who should be doomed to adjust by reason every morning all the minute detail of a domestic day.

'Those who marry at an advanced age will probably escape the encroachments of their children; but, in diminution of this advantage, they will be likely to leave them, ignorant and helpless, to a guardian's mercy: or, if that should not happen, they must at least go out of the world before they see those whom they love best either wise or great.

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'From their children, if they have less to fear, they have less also to hope, and they lose, without equivalent, the joys of early love, and the convenience of uniting with manners pliant, and minds susceptible of new impressions, which might wear away their dissimilarities by long cohabitation, as soft bodies, by continual attrition, conform their surfaces to each other.

15

'I believe it will be found that those who marry late are best pleased with their children, and those who marry early with their partners.'

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'The union of these two affections,' said Rasselas, 'would produce all that could be wished. Perhaps there is a time when marriage might unite them, a time neither too early for the father, nor too late for the husband.'

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'Every hour,' answered the princess, 'confirms my prejudice in favour of the position so often uttered by the mouth of Imlac, "That nature sets her gifts on the right hand and on the left." Those conditions which flatter hope and attract desire are so constituted that, as we approach one, we recede from another. There are goods so opposed that we cannot seize both, but, by too much prudence, may pass between them at too great a distance to reach either. This is often the fate of long consideration; he does nothing who endeavours to do more than is allowed to humanity. Flatter not yourself with contrarieties of pleasure. Of the blessings set before you make your choice, and be content. No man can taste the fruits of autumn while he is delighting his scent with the flowers of the spring: no man can, at the same time, fill his cup from the source and from the mouth of the Nile.'

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Samuel Johnson *Rasselas*

CONTINUED

But what have I here said, that reflections very refin'd and metaphysical have little or no influence upon us? This opinion I can scarce forbear retracting, and condemning from my present feeling and experience. The *intense* view of these manifold contradictions and imperfections in human reason has so wrought upon me, and heated my brain, that I am ready to reject all belief and reasoning, and can look upon no opinion even as more probable or likely than another: Where am I, or what? From what causes do I derive my existence, and to what condition shall I return? Whose favour shall I court, and whose anger must I dread? What beings surround me? and on whom have I any influence, or who have any influence on me? I am confounded with all these questions, and begin to fancy myself in the most deplorable condition imaginable, environ'd with the deepest darkness, and utterly depriv'd of the use of every member and faculty.

Most fortunately it happens, that since reason is incapable of dispelling these clouds, nature herself suffices to that purpose, and cures me of this philosophical melancholy and delirium, either by relaxing this bent of mind, or by some avocation, and lively impression of my senses, which obliterate all these chimeras. I dine, I play a game of back-gammon, I converse, and am merry with my friends; and when after three or four hour's amusement, I wou'd return to these speculations, they appear so cold, and strain'd, and ridiculous, that I cannot find in my heart to enter into them any farther.

Here then I find myself absolutely and necessarily determin'd to live, and talk, and act like other people in the common affairs of life. But notwithstanding that my natural propensity, and the course of my animal spirits and passions reduce me to this indolent belief in the general maxims of the world, I still feel such remains of my former disposition, that I am ready to throw all my books and papers into the fire, and resolve never more to renounce the pleasures of life for the sake of reasoning and philosophy. For these are my sentiments in that splenetic humour, which governs me at present. I may, nay I must yield to the current of nature, in submitting to my senses and understanding; and in this blind submission I shew most perfectly my sceptical disposition and principles.

David Hume *A Treatise of Human Nature*

TURN OVER

SECTION B

Answer one of the following questions. Your answer should refer to at least two of the works taught in seminars on the course unless otherwise specified.

9. *Horatio*: The Design of Speech is to make our Thoughts known to others.
Cleomenes: I don't think so ... I am of the opinion, that the first Design of speech was to persuade others, either to give Credit to what the speaking Person would have them believe; or else to act and suffer such Things, as he would compel them to suffer, if they were entirely in his Power.

(Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees*)

In the light of this quotation, write about the 'Design of Speech' in one or more works of the period.

10. Genres are actually in a continual state of transmutation. It is by their modification, primarily, that individual works convey their literary meaning.

(Alastair Fowler)

Discuss. Candidates may, if they wish, answer with reference to only one genre.

11. Consider some responses to time and change in some works of the period.

12. My God, the poore expressions of my Love
Which warme these lines & serve them up to thee
Are so, as for the present I did move,
Or rather as thou movedst mee.

But what shall issue, whither these my words
Shal help another, but my judgment bee,
As a burst fouling-peece doth save the birds
But kill the man, is seald with thee.

Use these opening lines of George Herbert's 'Perseverance' as the starting-point for an essay on any religious writing of the period.

13. Examine the suggestion that changing definitions of public and private are clearly in evidence in the writing of the period.

CONTINUED

14. This period sees the emergence for the first time of a literature produced for commercial circulation to an extended reading public. Consider the ways in which these circumstances are negotiated in any two or more texts.
15. 'A spirit of petulance, an air of self-conceit, and an affectation of learning, are diffused throughout the whole performance, which is likewise blameable for some gross expressions, impure ideas, and a general want of decorum.'

(Critical Review, 1761, on Tristram Shandy)

Discuss the implications of 'decorum' for the fiction of the period.

16. The absence or abuse of paternal authority is crucial to the plots of many works of the period. Discuss its significance in at least two texts.

END OF PAPER