

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON**

University of London

**EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS**

For The Following Qualification:–

*B.A.*

**Renaissance Literature 1520–1674**

**COURSE CODE : ENGLN03**

**DATE : 16–MAY–06**

**TIME : 14.30**

**TIME ALLOWED : 3 Hours**

## **Renaissance Literature 1520-1674**

Answer three questions, at least one from each section. Answers in Section B should make reference to at least two works unless otherwise indicated.

Candidates must not present substantially the same material in any two answers, whether on this paper or in other parts of the examination.

### **SECTION A**

1.     **Either: (a)**     **What uses does Sidney make of topographical spaces in his works? You may consider houses, gardens or any other kinds of space.**  
  
          **Or:     (b)**     **Write about self-revelation and self-concealment in Sidney's works.**  
  
          **Or:     (c)**     **'This idle work of mine' (Sir Philip Sidney, dedication of *The Arcadia*). How does Sidney use ideas of 'idleness' in his works?**
  
2.     **Either: (a)**     **Do you find a tension between public and private concerns in Spenser's works?**  
  
          **Or:     (b)**     **Explore the influence of any one or two of the following authors on Spenser: Virgil, Ovid, Petrarch, Chaucer.**  
  
          **Or:     (c)**     **'The whole work of Spenser was an exposition of Platonic, courtly, and yet Puritan ideals' (L.G. Salingar). In what ways do you find Spenser's Protestant faith present in his literary art?**

**TURN OVER**



SECTION B

5. How important is a knowledge of the political contexts of their times for an appreciation of the poetry of Wyatt or Surrey or both?
6. Walter R. Davis sees English Renaissance prose fiction as characterised by 'a series of acts of violence' against women. Is this fair?

7. His golden locks time hath to silver turned;  
O time too swift, O swiftness never ceasing!

(George Peele)

What different treatments of the theme of mutability have you encountered in the poetry of the Elizabethan court?

8. Either: (a) Where in Marlowe's works do you detect the influence of the ideas of Machiavelli?
- Or: (b) Compare and contrast the structures of at least two of Marlowe's works.

9. Either: (a) 'Licence my roving hands, and let them go / Before, behind, between, above, below' (Elegy 19). How much interest in the sense of touch do you find in Donne's works?
- Or: (b) What satirical qualities do you find in Donne's writings? Your answer need not be confined to his Satires.

10. In *The Duchess of Malfi*, Bosola tells the Cardinal:

when thou kill'st thy sister,  
Thou took'st from Justice her most equal balance,  
And left her naught but her sword.

Do you find any kinds of balance in the plays of Webster, or in any other revenge tragedies?

11. 'There is no hate lost between us' (Middleton, *The Witch*). How far is hatred a driving force in Middleton's plays? If you wish you may confine your answer to either his comedies or his tragedies.

TURN OVER

12. The dichotomy of youth and age is one of those conceptual polarities, like body and soul and nature and art, that Renaissance writers thought *with* as much as they thought *about*.

(Steven Marx)

Explore the dichotomy of youth and age in city comedy, or in any other Renaissance writings where it seems to you to be of interest.

13. Discuss the influence of Kyd or Marlowe or Webster on any later dramatist.
14. 'Bacon's style, though elegant, is by no means as simple as it seems or as it is often described' (David Simpson). Use this statement as a starting point for an essay on Bacon's style. You may confine your answer to Bacon's *Essays*.
15. In 1792 Alexander Geddes wrote of the Authorised Version of the Bible that 'every sentence, every word, every syllable, every letter and point, seem to have been weighed with the nicest exactitude'. Discuss.
16. Betty Travitsky has written of Renaissance women writers:

It is primarily in the point of view of the writers, the expression of a different frame of reference, a different dimension of experience, such as family affairs, or a twist on a familiar theme, rather than a feminine development of new forms, that the distinctive contribution of these women lies.

Do you agree?

17. Either: (a) Robert Ellrodt detects 'flashes of irony or humour' in Herbert's poems. Do you?
- Or: (b) How important is its title for an understanding of *The Temple*?
18. Joshua Scodel writes that Vaughan 'produces great passages rather than wholes, subordinating development to rapturous expostulation'. Do you agree?
19. Peter Davidson has claimed that the nineteenth-century novelist Walter Scott created the stereotype of the Cavalier poet as 'a sensual and drunken aristocrat, redeemed by elements of courtesy and loyalty'. On the evidence of your reading of Cavalier poetry, how misleading is this stereotype?

CONTINUED

20. Either: (a) 'Marvell's poetry is shot through with the consciousness of a conflict between subjective and objective, between the idea and reality' (Christopher Hill). Discuss.

Or: (b) How well structured are Marvell's poems?

21. Assess the importance of Donne or Jonson or Herbert for any later poet of the period.

22. The idea of progressive evolution is not strong in seventeenth-century poetry: the present is commonly a matter of a struggle to preserve or reclaim.

(George Parfitt)

Discuss. You may, if you wish, limit your answer to a single poet.

23. Consider the significances of the country or the city or both in writing of the Civil War period.

24. Donne described paradoxes as 'alarums to truth to arme her' (*Paradoxes and Problems*). Is this an accurate description of how paradox is used in Renaissance writing? You may, if you wish, restrict your answer to a single author.

25. Write on the relation between style and self-presentation in any prose writer of the period.

26.                   And cheerfully at sea  
                      Success you still entice  
                          To get the pearl and gold,  
                          And ours to hold  
                      VIRGINIA,  
                          Earth's only paradise.

(Michael Drayton, 'To the Virginian Voyage')

In what ways do you find the age of discovery and exploration reflected in English Renaissance literature?

27. Write on collecting or categorizing in any literature of the period.

END OF PAPER