

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

University of London

EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

For the following qualifications :-

B.A.

Italian X215: Renaissance History and Art

COURSE CODE : ITALX215

UNIT VALUE : 0.50

DATE : 23-MAY-02

TIME : 14.30

TIME ALLOWED : 2 hours

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TURN OVER

First-year Italian and Design candidates and Socrates students from Italy must answer either Question 1 or Question 2, and **must** answer Question 3.

All other candidates must answer Questions 1 and 3.

1. Translate into English and write a commentary on ONE of the following passages. (First-year Italian and Design candidates and Socrates students from Italy may answer this question if they wish, or they may answer question 2 instead. All other candidates **must** answer Question 1.)

- (a) Con questi io m'ingagliofo per tutto dí giuocando a cricca, a triche-trach, et poi dove nascono mille contese et infiniti dispetti di parole iniuriose, et il piú delle volte si combatte un quattrino et siamo sentiti non di manco gridare da San Casciano. Cosí rinvolto entra questi pidocchi traggio el cervello di muffa, et sfogo questa malignità di questa mia sorta, sendo contento mi calpesti per questa via, per vedere se la se ne vergognassi. Venuta la sera, mi ritorno in casa, et entro nel mio scrittoio; et in su l'uscio mi spoglio quella veste cotidiana, piena di fango et di loto, et mi metto panni reali et curiali; et rivestito condecientemente entro nelle antique corti degli antiqui huomini, dove, da loro ricevuto amorevolmente, mi pasco di quel cibo, che *solum* [i.e., Latin for `solo'] è mio, et che io nacqui per lui; dove io non mi vergogno parlare con loro, et domandarli della ragione delle loro actioni; et quelli per loro humanità mi rispondono; et non sento per quattro hore di tempo alcuna noia, sdimenticho ogni affanno, non temo la povertà, non mi sbigottiscie la morte: tucto mi transferisco in loro.

Niccolò Machiavelli, Letter to Francesco Vettori, 10 December 1513

- (b) E a dì 19 d'aprile 1498, si lesse in Consiglio, nella sala grande, el processo di frate Girolamo, ch' egli aveva scritto di sua mano, el quale noi tenevamo che fussi profeta, el quale confessava no'essere profeta, e non aveva da Dio le cose che predicava; e confessò molti casi occorsi nel processo delle sue predicazioni essere el contrario di quello ci dava ad intendere. E io mi trovai a udire leggere tale processo; onde mi maravigliavo e stavo stupefatto e in ammirazione. E dolore sentiva l'anima mia, vedere andare per terra uno sì fatto edificio per avere fatto tristo fondamento d'una sola bugia. Aspettavo Firenze una nuova Gierusalemme donde avessi a uscire le leggi e lo splendore e l'esempio della buona vita, e vedere la novazione della Chiesa, la conversione degli infedeli, e la consolazione de' buoni.

Luca Landucci, *Diario*

- (c) E perché fu di ottimo giudizio, considerò che tutte le figure che non posavano né scortavano coi piedi in sul piano, ma stavano in punta di piedi, mancavano d'ogni bontà e maniera nelle cose essenziali, e coloro che le fanno mostrano di non intender lo scórto. E se bene Paulo Uccello vi si era messo et aveva fatto qualche cosa agevolando in parte questa difficoltà, Masaccio nondimeno, variando in molti modi, fece molto meglio gli scórti — e per ogni sorte di veduta — che niun altro che insino allora fusse stato. E dipinse le cose sue con buona unione e morbidezza, accompagnando con le incarnazioni delle teste e dei nudi i colori de' panni, i quali si diletto di fare con poche pieghe e facili, come fa il vivo e naturale. Il che è stato di grande utile agl'artefici, e ne merita essere comendato come se ne fusse stato inventore.

Vasari, *Life of Masaccio*

2. Comment on ONE of the following passages. (Only first-year Italian and Design candidates and Socrates students from Italy **may** attempt this question):

- (a) In the Middle Ages both sides of human consciousness — that which was turned within as that which was turned without — lay dreaming or half awake beneath a common veil. The veil was woven of faith, illusion, and childish prepossession, through which the world and history were seen clad in strange hues. Man was conscious of himself only as a member of a race, people, party, family or corporation — only through some general category. In Italy this veil first melted into air; an *objective* treatment and consideration of the State and of all the things of this world became possible. The *subjective* side at the same time asserted itself with corresponding emphasis; man became a spiritual *individual* and recognized himself as such. In the same way the Greek had once distinguished himself from the barbarian, and the Arabian had felt himself an individual at a time when other Asiatics knew themselves only as members of a race. It will not be difficult to show that this result was owing, above all, to the political circumstances of Italy.

Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*

- (b) My brother, so that I might continue to keep you informed of my news, today I besieged one of the strongest places in this whole region, both for its defences and its situation. It is called Monte San Giovanni, which belongs to the Marquis of Pescara [Bernardo Francesco Davalos (1489-1529), adhering to those opposed to me, and is near to my route. This town, although I petitioned many times that it should grant me free passage for my enterprise, replied otherwise than it should have done.

And for some time the garrison of this place had not ceased to attack, put to the torch, plunder and destroy all those in its vicinity whom it knew to be my friends and allies, and those who adhered to my side, especially, after I had entered into Rome, those of the Papal States. My cousin Montpensier had arrived before me with my artillery for the assault and after firing for four hours my said artillery had made a breach wide enough for an assault. I ordered it to be made by men-at-arms and others, and though the place was held by 500 to 600 good fighting men as well as its inhabitants, they went in in such a manner that, thanks to God, [the town] has been taken with little loss to me, and to the defenders great loss, punishment and great example to those others who might think of so obstructing me. And I believe that for the trouble that they have given me they have paid very dearly.

King Charles VIII. Bulletin from Veroli. 9 February 1495

- (c) Aldus Manutius of Rome to the Reader. All inventions, however clever and advantageous they may be, assuredly become corrupted over time, or rather are turned to bad ends by the evil of man, who in the belief that they are born only to make profit, ever search what seems to them their own profit from other people's loss. We have seen this for ourselves in our own times with regard to the remarkable and very difficult method of printing books. For although there is no one who does not acknowledge how much benefit he hoped this invention would bring, nevertheless I dare not say how much disadvantage it has brought instead, what ruin it has wrought on learning, how much destruction, unless God prohibits it, it seemingly causes and will cause. For in the first place, we can see into whose hands, those of craftsmen, have fallen the sacred monuments of the scriptures. Again, we can see what learning those have who dare to explain, comment upon and correct every kind of book. For this reason there is no small risk that we shall pervert this gift of printing books that immortal God has bestowed upon mankind, this gift that permits even those of the youngest age to indulge rashly to their heart's content in whatsoever book he wishes, into a very great evil and turn to the destruction of the Holy Scriptures. But let us speak of these matters elsewhere. For this would no longer be a brief letter if I were to deal with these matters in detail and together.

Aldus Manutius. Prefatory letter. July 1499

3 Answer ONE of the following (All candidates including Italian and Design candidates and Socrates students from Italy **must** attempt this question)

- (a) What motivated European interest in 'Cathay' during the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries?
- (b) In what ways did classical architecture influence Renaissance religious architecture?
- (c) On what was the wealth of late medieval and Renaissance cities based?
- (d) What was Italian Renaissance humanism?
- (e) Comment on the picture below

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