

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

University of London

EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

For The Following Qualification:-

B.A.

Scand. Studs. SC5571: Modern Icelandic Literature: Special Topics

COURSE CODE : SCAN5571

UNIT VALUE : 0.50

DATE : 11-MAY-05

TIME : 10.00

TIME ALLOWED : 3 Hours

Answer **TWO** questions. **BOTH** questions carry equal marks.

Candidates must avoid any duplication of material within this paper, and must not cover the same ground as in an assessed or extended essay.

1. 'The prominent position occupied by *Grasaferð* in the Icelandic canon is entirely unwarranted, as it never started a new paradigm, and is solely based in the reputation of its author, Jónas Hallgrímsson'. To what extent do you agree with this claim?
2. The role of the imaginative and fantastic was long marginalised in the Icelandic canon, although it was seminal in the development of Icelandic fiction. Trace its history, position and influence in Icelandic prose literature, with specific reference to AT LEAST TWO works read on the course.
3. 'The place of *Piltur og stúlka* in Icelandic literary history is nothing but a historical accident'. Discuss.
4. Gestur Pálsson's reputation as the 'pioneer of the Icelandic short story' is largely based in *Vordraumur*. To what extent is this reputation justified?
5. Compare and contrast the ways in which *Leidd í kirkju* and *Týndu hringarnir* use love and marriage to criticise the position of women in Icelandic society, and how this influenced their reception.
6. EITHER (a) 'En innri friður sérhvers manns er kominn undir eðli drauma hans: hvernig hann sjálfan dreymir tilveruna'. Discuss how Eyjólfur's words elucidate the underlying theme that connects the two stories in *Svartfugl*.

OR (b) 'For the reader, "who wrote it", rather than "whodunnit", is the key to *Svartfugl*'. To what extent do you agree with this statement?
7. Compare and contrast the construction and expression of self in *Svartfugl* and *Frá myrkri til ljóss*.
8. According to Helga Kress, Hulda's *Síðsumarkvöld* was equally, if not more innovative than Sigurður Nordal's *Hel*, although it has consistently been excluded from the canon. Do you agree with Kress's assessment? Discuss with direct reference to the story itself.
9. What may readers today learn from the literary polemic between Sigurður Nordal and Einar H. Kvaran?
10. Compare and contrast the ways in which Sigurður Nordal and Matthías Viðar Sæmundsson put language at the centre of their discussions on literary history.

11. Traditionally, language and nationality of the author have been among the most prominent boundaries of national canons. On what grounds would you argue for or against the inclusion of Gunnar Gunnarsson and Kristjana Gunnars in Icelandic literary history?
12. To what extent do you find the application of international terms such as 'modernist', 'post-colonial' and 'magical realist' useful in approaching Icelandic literary works?