

Friday 27 May 2022: 12pm

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Saturday 28 May 2022: 12pm

Part II Paper 17

LYRIC

Answer **three** questions.

All questions must be answered with detailed reference to particular lyric poems. 'Lyric poems' and 'lyric poetry' shall be understood as including verse for songs. In questions where a quotation is attributed, candidates are not obliged to refer to that author in their answer unless specifically required to do so.

*Candidates must show substantial knowledge of lyric written during **at least two** of the following three date ranges: (i) before 1700; (ii) 1700-1900; (iii) after 1900. By 'substantial knowledge' is meant the equivalent of one essay or a third of the paper as a whole.*

You may discuss lyric poetry composed in languages other than English. Where you quote in a foreign language, you must provide a translation of the words quoted into English. The weight of your answers to the paper as a whole must fall on lyric poems in English, but there is no requirement for the weight of any individual answer to do so. Where your attention is on the English version of a foreign language poem, your answer should, where relevant, consider the fact of translation.

*Do **not** present the same material twice, **either** in this paper **or** in the examination as a whole.*

Irrelevant answers, or answers only tenuously related to the question, will be penalised.

In the case of handwritten scripts, illegible handwriting may place candidates at a disadvantage.

*Include your **number**, not your name, on submitted scripts.*

There will be a word-count range of 800-1200 per essay, which is intended to approximate to the amount that can be written by hand under normal examination conditions.

Examination responses should conform to the following presentation requirements: they should be in minimum 12pt type; should use a sans serif typeface (eg Arial or Calibri); should be 1.5 or double-spaced; and should be submitted as a word-processed document (in .docx or .rtf format).

1. 'Farewell, friend. | I send you this mixture of honey with white | milk, which the stirred foam crowns, | a drink of song accompanied by the Aeolian breaths of pipes, | late though it be.' (PINDAR, Nemean 3)
What kind of a thing is a lyric?
2. 'You cannot say anything about a poem unless you know where you are.' (ALLEN GROSSMAN)
Discuss.
3. 'We listen to love songs not only in moments of purposeful attention but also in airport lounges, supermarkets, dentists' offices, and cars. Lyric follows us everywhere; it forms a discursive field of unsettling ubiquity.' (NANCY VICKERS)
How have the ways we hear lyrics changed?
4. 'Lyrics offer one example of how literary genres can, if situated or flagged in a certain way, act as forms of self-theorization that emerge from literature rather than treatises.' (INGRID NELSON)
In the light of this comment, discuss the relations between lyric poetry and lyric theory.
5. 'Your own automatic "intertextuality", to give it a misleadingly dignified name from the lit-crit lexicon, drives you spare. Quotation as white noise can be maddening.' (DENISE RILEY)
How do lyric poets exploit or resist the possibilities of intertextuality?
6. 'Poetic form made of language relies on rhythm and musical effects that are known with our entire bodies.' (SUSAN STEWART)
Consider the body as subject **and/or** object **and/or** agent of lyric poetry.
7. 'Is poetic technique a means of liberation? Or does adopting inherited techniques amount to surrender, and to confinement? In some sense the answer is always "both".' (STEPHANIE BURT)
Is it?
8. 'The [ancient Greek] lyric poets present a borderline case, living as they did in the first outburst of literary activity that followed the alphabet, commissioned as they were to compose lyrics for oral and public performance but somehow involved also in making written record of these poems. They are poets exploring the edge between oral and literate procedure, probing forward to see what kind of thing writing is, reading is, poetry can be. The position is not an easy one. Perhaps that is why the poems are so good.' (ANNE CARSON)
Write about the relations between lyric poetry and developments in technologies of writing **and/or** mediation (e.g. inscriptions, printing, sound recording, radio, photocopying, digital media). Your answer need not refer to ancient lyric.

9. 'The lyric makes possible a beholding of the subject's subjectivity and subjection, the enactment of voice that belongs, volatily, to the one who speaks.' (KEVIN QUASHIE)
How has lyric poetry witnessed the subjection of its speaking subjects?
10. 'The semantic and the visual content of a book can give a reader mixed messages about how unified the volume is, leading her to debate that issue and uncover or suppress signs of unity.' (HEATHER DUBROW)
In the light of this comment, write about the place of lyric poems within larger entities (e.g. song cycle, sequence, anthology, edition, album).
11. 'When composition begins, inspiration is already on the decline, and the most glorious poetry that has ever been communicated to the world is probably a feeble shadow of the original conceptions of the poet.' (PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY)
Discuss.
12. 'Poetry has no proof nor plan nor evidence by decree or in any other way. From somewhere in the twilight realm of sound a spirit of belief flares up at the point where meaning stops and the unreality of what seems most real floods over us.' (SUSAN HOWE)
Do you agree?
13. 'What a Hazard an Accent is! When I think of the Hearts it has scuttled or sunk, I almost fear to lift my Hand to so much as a punctuation.' (EMILY DICKINSON)
Discuss the challenges of presenting lyric poetry on the page (layout, spacing, punctuation, diacritics, orthography, etc.) for poets **and/or** editors **and/or** readers.
14. 'If sounds dominate, sense is compromised; if sense is too fixed, sounds are not free to do their kind of affective signifying work.' (MUTLU KONUK BLASING)
Demonstrate or dispute this proposition.
15. 'What is addressed takes shape only in the space of this conversation, gathers around the I addressing and naming it. But what's addressed and is now become a Thou through naming, as it were, also brings along its otherness into this present.' (PAUL CELAN)
Is lyric address a form of conversation?
16. "'Lyric" is a fictional production that has been historically mobilized to bolster ideals of transcendent white humanity, particularly as they constellate around the fantasy of the universal lyric speaker who operates as the stand-in for the sanctity of white interiority against which blackness is cast as its otherness.' (JESS COTTON)
Discuss.

17. 'When words cohere musically they allude to significance beyond paraphrase. How is an explainer to clarify that in prose?' (ROBERT VON HALLBERG)
Write about the role of musicality in lyric language.
18. 'Poetic form may be defined as the kind of structure produced by a patterning of the formal properties of language according to some principle of organization and/or repetition.' (BARBARA HERRNSTEIN SMITH)
Taking Smith's definition (with which you may wish to take issue) as a starting point, consider the role of poetic form in lyric poetry.
19. 'Intense observation of things is one of the few doors humans have to escape our own overwhelming subject-being. How else, besides perceiving, can we begin to disassemble ourselves?' (MARCELLA DURAND)
Do you agree with this account of why lyric poets observe the natural world?
20. 'A songwriter should not have anything really new to say, at least if he expects to say it with the words of the song alone. A poet on paper has much greater freedom to test the patience and ingenuity of the reader and to stretch his comprehension.'
(MARK W. BOOTH)
Test this distinction.
21. 'What we call lyric poetry is literature, something whose detachment from context is, in a manner of speaking, its foundation.' (WILLIAM WATERS)
How detached is lyric poetry from its social, performative, compositional, or other contexts?
22. 'Metaphor is an alien element within everyday language, the same way a foreign language is alien to domestic speech. As a result, the difference between the proper and the foreign determines the way both metaphors and translations operate.'
(RAINER GULDIN)
How does lyric manage the difference between languages **and/or** that between the figurative and the literal? Your answer need not refer to translated poetry.
23. 'A poem is really a kind of machine for producing the poetic state of mind by means of words. The effect of this machine is uncertain, for nothing is certain about action on other minds.' (PAUL VALÉRY)
Discuss.
24. 'A lyric poem is not a script for speaking. Nor is it exactly a staging of speech.' (J. MARK SMITH)
So what is it?

25. 'Fiction is about what happens next. Poetry is about what happens now.' (ALICE FULTON)
Discuss.

END OF PAPER