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SECOND PUBLIC EXAMINATION

**HONOUR SCHOOL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
2006**

**COURSE I AND COURSE II
PAPER 2 AND B9 SHAKESPEARE**

**HONOUR SCHOOL OF ENGLISH AND MODERN LANGUAGES
2006**

PART II, PAPER 5 SHAKESPEARE

**HONOUR SCHOOL OF CLASSICS AND ENGLISH 2006
PART A, PAPER 2(b) SHAKESPEARE**

**HONOUR SCHOOL OF MODERN HISTORY AND ENGLISH 2006
PAPER (iv) AND (v) SHAKESPEARE**

TRINITY TERM 2006

Tuesday 16 May 2006, 9.30 a.m. – 12.30pm

Time allowed – Three hours

Answer *three* questions. At least two of your answers must deal with more than one work by Shakespeare. You should pay careful attention in your answers to the precise terms of the quotations and questions.

Do not turn over until told that you may do so

Answer three questions. At least two of your answers must deal with more than one work by Shakespeare. You should pay careful attention in your answers to the precise terms of the quotations and questions.

1. **Either (a)** 'A coherent psychological account of the *Sonnets* is what the *Sonnets* exist to frustrate' (HELEN VENDLER). Discuss.

OR (b) 'Shakespeare explores both rhetoric as problem and rhetoric as inevitability' (PETER G. PLATT). Discuss in relation to Shakespeare's poems.

OR (c) 'The anxiety of influence, as a critical idea, can confront no more severe test than Shakespeare's total freedom of representation' (HAROLD BLOOM). Do you find anxiety about literary influence in Shakespeare's poems?
2. **Either (a)** 'Dost thou think because thou art virtuous there shall be no more cakes and ale?' (*Twelfth Night*). Discuss the connection between virtue and merriment in Shakespeare's plays.

Or (b) Compare Shakespeare's comedies to the comic work of *one or more* contemporary playwrights.
3. 'The essential comic resolution, therefore, is an individual release which is also a social reconciliation' (NORTHROP FRYE)

Does Shakespeare's drama offer 'essential comic resolution'? (You need not restrict your answer to Shakespeare's comedies).
4. 'In *As You Like It* Rosalind is so firmly in control of her disguise that the emphasis is on the pleasures rather than the dangers implicit in the transgression of sexual difference. Other heroines are not so fortunate.' (CATHERINE BELSEY).
Discuss.
5. 'His plays are properly to be distinguished only into comedies and tragedies. Those which are called histories . . . are really tragedies, with a run or mixture of comedy amongst them' (NICHOLAS ROWE).
Are any of Shakespeare's histories really tragedies?
6. 'The histories expose the idealizations of political power by presenting rule as role, by revealing that power passes to him who can best control and manipulate the visual and verbal symbols of power' (DAVID SCOTT KASTAN).
Discuss.

7. 'Of my nation! What ish my nation?' (*Henry V*).
Discuss.

8. 'No man is the lord of anything,
Though in and of him there be much consisting,
Till he communicate his parts to others' (*Troilus and Cressida*).

Examine this quotation in the light of Shakespeare's depiction of the Roman **and/or** Greek world.

9. 'It is surely impossible to deny that certain words—"time," "man," "done"—and certain themes—"blood," "darkness"—are the matrices of the language of *Macbeth*. In the period of the great tragedies these matrices appear to have been fundamental to Shakespeare's procedures' (FRANK KERMODE). Consider the place of such 'matrices' (sets of related words or themes) in any **two or more** Shakespearean works.

10. 'We are mocked with art' (*The Winter's Tale*)
How and why does Shakespeare draw attention to artifice in his plays and/or poems?

11. 'To understand how Shakespeare used his imagination to transform his life into his art, it is important to use our own imagination' (STEPHEN GREENBLATT).

Either (a) Does Shakespeare ever 'transform his life into his art'?

Or (b) Would you defend the place of biography in the study of Shakespeare's work.

12. 'The sweet witty soul of Ovid lives in mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakespeare' (FRANCIS MERES).
Discuss the influence of Ovid **and/or** other classical authors on Shakespeare's work.

13. 'A *unity of feeling* pervades the whole of his plays. In *Romeo and Juliet* all is Youth and Spring – it is Youth with its follies, its virtues, its precipitancies; it is Spring with its odours, flowers, and transiency – the same feeling commences, goes through, and ends the play' (SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE).

Either (a) Examine the case for 'unity of feeling' in one or more Shakespeare plays.

OR (b) What did Romantic criticism contribute to the understanding of Shakespeare's work?

14. 'Despite Shakespeare's sometimes astonishing moments of sympathetic engagement with his female characters, his ability to see the world from their point of view, his women will tend to be like Gertrude, more significant as screens for male fantasy than as independent characters making their own claim to dramatic reality' (JANET ADELMAN).

Either (a) Discuss.

OR (b) Assess the contribution of Feminist *and/or* Psychoanalytic criticism to the study of Shakespeare.

15. 'Are ye fantastical, or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show?' (*Macbeth*)

Either (a) Consider the importance of the supernatural in Shakespeare.

OR (b) Consider the unreliability of 'outward show' in *two or more* Shakespeare plays.

16. 'Alack, what heinous sin is it in me
To be ashamed to be my father's child!
But though I am a daughter to his blood
I am not to his manners' (*The Merchant of Venice*)
Consider filial obedience *and* disobedience in Shakespeare.

17. 'A grave change in the whole tone of Shakespeare's writing arrives at the time of *Hamlet* (1600)' (WILLIAM EMPSON).

Either (a) Do you agree?

OR (b) Discuss the significance of any single date in Shakespeare's career.

18. O thou wilt
come no more, never, never, never, pray you undo this button,
thank you sir, O, o, o, o.'
(*The History of King Lear* (1608))

Thou'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never.
Pray you undo this button. Thank you sir,
Do you see this? Look on her? Look her lips,
Look there, look there. *He dies*
(*The Tragedy of King Lear* (1623)).

What, if anything, do textual variants reveal about the way in which Shakespeare worked?

19. 'Shakespeare's whole style is so pester'd with Figurative expression, that it is as affected as it is obscure' (JOHN DRYDEN).

Either a) Consider this imputation of Shakespeare's style.

OR b) How has *one* Shakespeare critic affected your reading of *two or more* plays?

20. 'To give up the primacy of character in Shakespeare studies seems tantamount to giving up individualism' (WILLIAM KERRIGAN). Discuss with reference to **two or more** plays.
21. 'Enter Mariners wet.' (*The Tempest*). How did Shakespeare exploit the resources *and* the limitations of the early modern theatre?
22. 'I tell you what mine authors say.' (*Pericles*). Does Shakespeare follow his sources?
23. 'Every new Hamlet must link the strands of the play by an individual, original attitude' (JOHN GIELGUD). Examine **two or more** theatre productions **and/or** films of **any** Shakespeare plays in the light of this statement.
24. Consider Shakespeare's work in relation to *one* of the following: co-authorship, multiple plots, the acting company, censorship, patronage, **or** adaptation.
25. Assess the influence of one of the following on Shakespeare: Niccolò Machiavelli, Michel de Montaigne, John Lyly, Ben Jonson, Thomas Middleton, John Fletcher.
26. 'Editors usually do, and should, strive for objectivity in their labours, but they are, as we all are, creatures of their times: what looks like objectivity to one generation may well look like distortion to another' (LEAH MARCUS). Compare **two or more** editions of a Shakespeare text.
27. 'Teaching Shakespeare's plays and writing books about them is unlikely to bring down capitalism, but it is a point of intervention' (ALAN SINFIELD). In what way can the interpretation of Shakespeare be a political act?

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