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SECOND PUBLIC EXAMINATION

**HONOUR SCHOOL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
2007**

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

**HONOUR SCHOOL OF ENGLISH AND MODERN LANGUAGES
2007**

PART II, PAPER 5 SHAKESPEARE

**HONOUR SCHOOL OF CLASSICS AND ENGLISH 2007
PART A, PAPER 2(b) SHAKESPEARE**

**HONOUR SCHOOL OF MODERN HISTORY AND ENGLISH 2007
PAPER (iv) AND (v) SHAKESPEARE**

TRINITY TERM 2007

Monday 14 May 2007, 9.30 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.

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. **INGENIOSO:** Proceed briefly in thy censure ... William Shakespeare?
 JUDICIO: Who loves not Adonis' love, or Lucrece' rape?
 His sweeter verse contains heart-robbing lines,
 Could but a graver subject him content,
 Without love's foolish lazy languishment (Anon, *Return from Parnassus*).

EITHER (a) Consider love and languishment in Shakespeare's narrative poems.

OR (b) Is there a conflict between verse and subject in Shakespeare's narrative poems?

2. **EITHER** (a) 'Many of the characteristics central to other dramatic and narrative poetry ... are signally absent from Shakespeare's *Sonnets*' (HEATHER DUBROW). Discuss.

OR (b) 'Scorn not the sonnet ... with this key / Shakespeare unlocked his heart' (WORDSWORTH). Did he?

3. **EITHER** (a) 'In tragedy he is always struggling after some occasion to be comick; but in comedy he seems to repose, or to luxuriate, as in a mode of thinking congenial to his nature' (SAMUEL JOHNSON). Discuss.

OR (b) 'The unease with the utopian endings tragicomedy can provide requires our recognition of its radical ambivalence and open-endedness as a genre' (GORDON MCMULLAN). Do you agree? (You need not confine your answer to tragicomedies.)

4. 'Measure for Measure ... is something to serious for a comedy. Ye Plott is well layd but wants something to make it pleasant' (ABRAHAM WRIGHT, c. 1640).

EITHER (a) Are Shakespeare's comedies 'to[o] serious'?

OR (b) What does criticism from before the twentieth century contribute to our understanding of Shakespeare?

5. 'Tragedy for Shakespeare is the literary genre in which suffering is not only irreparable but is also neither compensated nor even effectively consoled' (DAVID SCOTT KASTAN). Do you agree?

6. **EITHER** a) 'To survey the corpus of Shakespeare's plays, especially those that engage historical events, is to see England as the organizing centre of the universe' (EMILY C. BARTELS). Discuss.

OR b) 'For Shakespeare history stands still. Every chapter opens and closes at the same point ... When the new prince ... assumes the crown he will be just as hated as his predecessor' (JAN KOTT). Discuss.

7. How political was Shakespeare?

8. Our slippery people,
Whose love is never link'd to the deserfer
Till his deserts are past (*Antony and Cleopatra*).

Consider Shakespeare's Roman **AND/OR** Greek world in the light of this quotation.

9. Thou shalt no sooner
March to assault thy country than to tread –
Trust to't, thou shalt not – on thy mother's womb,
That brought thee to this world (*Coriolanus*).

Explore the relationship between gender and politics in **two or more** plays.

10. 'The transvestite is an inherently theatrical figure which allows us to problematize the dynamics of desire and representation' (ROBERT L. A. CLARK and CLAIRE M. SPONSTER).

Discuss using **two or more** plays in your answer.

11. Ah, kill me with thy weapon, not with words!
My breast can better brook thy dagger's point
Than can my ears that tragic history (*Henry VI Part 3*).

EITHER (a) Consider the competing effectiveness of narrative and staged action in **one or more** plays.

OR (b) Consider the distrust of words in **one or more** plays.

12. 'If we value Shakespeare's plays, we must also think well of the theatrical circumstances that permitted, and encouraged, his genius to flourish' (STANLEY WELLS). Must we?
13. 'Every editor should be a director, whose page is his stage. Some editors are reluctant to accept that responsibility; they are fearful of infringing the domain of the director. They should not be. Directors are constantly infringing the domain of the editor. Directors always edit' (GEORGE WALTON WILLIAMS).

Discuss in relation to **EITHER** Shakespeare's editors **OR** Shakespeare's directors **OR** both.

14. 'Even when no second playwright intrudes, Shakespeare's texts are shaped by other collaborators' (GARY TAYLOR).

EITHER (a) Examine the shaping of **one or more** plays by Shakespeare in which a second playwright is thought to have 'intruded'.

OR (b) Write about the effect of 'other collaborators' (theatre, company, audience, readers etc.) on the way you understand Shakespeare.

15. 'Reade him, therefore; and againe, and againe: And if then you doe not like him, surely you are in some manifest danger, not to understand him' (JOHN HEMINGE and HENRY CONDELL).

EITHER (a) How has publication informed our understanding of Shakespeare?

OR (b) How useful are editorial notes to our understanding of Shakespeare?

16. RODRIGO: Tush, never tell me, I take it much unkindly
That you Iago, who has had my purse,
As if the strings were thine, should'st know of this. (*Othello*, Q1)

RODRIGO: Never tell me, I take it much unkindly
That thou (*Iago*), who hast had my purse,
As if ye strings were thine, should'st know of this. (*Othello*, Folio)

Is it appropriate to read quarto and folio editions of certain plays as distinct texts rather than variants of the same text?

17. Assess the importance of **one or more** of the following in the plays of Shakespeare: music; song; sound effects; visual effects; costume; props; slapstick; fooling.

18. 'I intend not to charge it [*Lear*] with those errors which all his plays lie under through his being acquainted with the rule of Aristotle' (LEWIS THEOBALD).

EITHER (a) How 'inacquainted' was Shakespeare with the classics?

OR (b) Was Shakespeare's dramatic practice inherently erroneous?

19. 'I was adored once too' (*Twelfth Night*).
'I am a man more sinned against than sinning' (*King Lear*).
'I will not love: if I do, hang me' (*Love's Labour's Lost*).

Write about self-knowledge in the works of Shakespeare using **one or more** of these quotations.

20. 'The interpretation of any one play of Shakespeare's depends upon an interpretative context constructed from the others' (RICHARD P. WHEELER).

Consider the light cast on **one** of Shakespeare's plays

EITHER (a) by Shakespeare's other plays.

OR (b) by the plays of other writers.

21. 'What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust?' (*Hamlet*)

Examine **EITHER** Shakespeare's poetic prose **OR** Shakespeare's prosaic verse.

22. ... in the night, imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush suppos'd a bear (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*).

Discuss the role of imagination **AND/OR** error in **at least two** plays of Shakespeare.

23. O cruel, irreligious piety! (*Timon of Athens*).

What use does Shakespeare make of religion in his works?

24. Assess the importance of **one** of the following contexts to Shakespeare's work: London; travelling; the court; disease; chronology.

25. LEIR: Come, son and daughter, that did me advance:
Repose with me awhile and then for France (ANON, *King Leir*, 1595).

LEAR: Divine Cordelia, all the Gods can witness
How much thy Love to Empire I prefer!
Thy bright Example shall convince the World
(Whatever Storms of Fortune are decreed)
That Truth and Vertue shall at last succeed (NAHUM TATE, *King Lear* ...
reviv'd with Alterations, 1681).

What can we learn from considering **EITHER** Shakespeare's adaptation of his sources, **OR** other people's adaptations of Shakespeare? (You may include theatre **AND/OR** film adaptations in your answer.)

26. Write about a critic, theory, or methodology you think particularly helpful to the study of Shakespeare.

27. Do you agree with those critics for whom Shakespeare's biography is irrelevant? Refer to **at least one** play and **at least one** biography in your answer.

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