

MLT1/SP5

MODERN AND MEDIEVAL LANGUAGES TRIPOS Part IB

Friday 1 June 2018

9 to 12

Paper Sp. 5

LATIN AMERICAN CULTURE AND HISTORY

*Answer* ***three*** *questions, at least* ***one*** *from each section.*

*Do* ***not*** *draw substantially on the same material for more than* ***one***

*answer.*

**STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS**

*20 Page Answer Book x 1 Rough work pad*

*Tags*

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

*None*

**You may not start to read the questions printed on the subsequent pages of this question paper until instructed that you may do so by the Invigilator**

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SECTION A

**Foundations, Identity, Difference**

1

‘Foundational Latin American narratives are paradoxical, arising from

simultaneous acts of creation and destruction.’

Discuss with reference to **two or more** works, at least **one** of which should be from the Colonial period.

2

‘La identidad no puede existir, ni mucho menos encontrar expresión

narrativa o social, sin la diferencia.’

Discuss with reference to **two or more** works.

3

‘Narration exposes, often despite itself, the *in-between* spaces in which

the meanings of national identity are negotiated or destabilized.’ Discuss with reference to **two or more** works.

4

‘Cada cultura, la criolla, la india, o la negra, se mantiene profundamente

diferenciada en su médula y evoluciona paralelamente a las otras.’ Discuss with reference to **two or more** works.

5

‘Hybridity is above all linguistic and cultural, rather than the biological

mixing of the “races” that the term would at first sight seem to imply.’

Discuss the extent to which **two or more** texts you have studied for this topic bear out this assertion.

6

‘The historical experience of Latin America has been that social change

has usually represented a form of rupture rather than a form of foundation.’

Discuss with reference to **two or more** Latin American narratives or historical sources.

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SECTION B

**Representing the City**

7

Answer **one** of the following with reference to **two or more** texts or films:

*(a)* ‘In the city, men and women are hardly more than automata, or crawling bugs that spawn and die.’

How applicable is this description to the representation of the city in the works you have studied for this topic?

*(b)* ‘The metropolis portrayed in these works is fundamentally *unreal*.’ Discuss.

*(c)* ‘These texts reveal the *other* city: the hidden, the sordid, the subterranean.’

Discuss.

**Charting Revolution**

8

Answer **one** of the following with reference to **two or more** texts (which

may include cultural or historical sources):

*(a)* ‘Esclavos o cuatreros\*, nunca hombres libres, y sin embargo dueños de un derecho que les permitía ser libres: la rebelión.’ (*Gringo viejo*)

In the light of this quotation, discuss the relationship between rebellion and freedom in the works you have studied for this topic.

\* *cuatrero*: ladrón de animales

*(b)* Discuss the interrelationship of **at least three** of the following in the texts you have studied for this topic:

1. rebellion and/or violence;
2. Oedipal rivalry;
3. subaltern language;
4. social class;
5. gender.

*(c)* ‘The history of the Mexican Revolution is much more than the history of a military battleground and a struggle for power. It is the history of a monumental social struggle that lacked a guiding ideology.’

Discuss.

(TURN OVER)

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**Penning the Dictator**

9

Answer **one** of the following with reference to **two or more** texts (which

may include cultural or historical sources):

*(a)* ‘Dictatorship writing both reveals and revels in the intimate relationship between language and power.’

Discuss.

*(b)* ‘Las palabras prohibidas son astutas, aprenden a moverse en la sombra, se introducen entrelíneas, … van de boca en boca y así consiguen transmitir las ideas y escribir la historia secreta, la historia oculta y verdadera de la realidad.’ (ISABEL ALLENDE).

In the light of this quotation, discuss the relationship between censorship and writing in texts you have studied for this topic.

*(c)* ‘Dictatorships emerge when national hegemonic processes break down and violence becomes the only way of “resolving” competing social demands.’

Discuss the validity of this statement with reference to the history **and/or**

cultural representation of **one or two** periods of dictatorship in Latin America.

**Labyrinths of Fiction**

10

Answer **one** of the following with reference to **two or more** texts or films:

*(a)* ‘Como todos los hombres de la Biblioteca, he viajado en mi juventud; he peregrinado en busca de un libro, acaso del catálogo de catálogos.’ (‘La Biblioteca de Babel’)

How far is such a quest, metaphorical or otherwise, represented in the works you have studied for this topic?

*(b)* ‘Metafictional texts are extensions of the genre of detective fiction: the truth is hidden, and eventually the truth is revealed.’

Discuss.

*(c)* ‘More than labyrinths of “fiction”, these texts are labyrinths of the social: what is revealed is the suffocating artifice of social codes and strictures.’

Discuss.

**END OF PAPER**