

MODERN AND MEDIEVAL LANGUAGES TRIPOS Part IB

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**Specimen Paper for Tripos 2018**

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Paper Sp. 3  
MEDIEVAL IBERIAN AND SPANISH GOLDEN AGE CULTURE

Answer **three** questions.

You may **not** answer more than **one** commentary question  
(i.e. questions marked with an asterisk).

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**

### War and the Hero

1 Answer **one** of the following with reference to *Libro de Alexandre* **or** the *Poema de Fernán González* **and** Berceo's *Vida de santo Domingo de Silos* **or** all three:

(a) 'The texts of War and the Hero register anxiety at the permeability of boundaries.'

(b) 'The heroes of *mester de clerecía* represent the best of what it is to be human, embodying the virtues of their time: *fortitudo*, *sapientia* and *mesura*.'

(c) 'The narrative poet exploits the confusion created by warfare, not just to convey historical context, but also to reflect the perplexing and ambiguous status of the hero.'

### Screening the Text

2 Discuss **one** of the following with reference to **two or more** texts and films studied in this topic:

(a) 'Filmic adaptations are fundamentally escapist, stripping away the problems and difficulties of the original text, and turning satire into cliché, the polysemic word into mere visual spectacle.'

(b) 'Filmic recreations of medieval and early modern texts turn us into voyeurs; they differ in the extent to which we are made aware of this manipulation.'

(c) 'An adaptation always teaches us more about the society in which it was produced than about the culture and history of the medieval and early modern periods.'

### The Great Romance

3 Discuss **one** of the following with reference to **two or more** of the authors **and two or more** of the primary texts studied for this topic:

(a) 'To try to write love is to confront the muck of language; that region of hysteria where language is both too much and too little, excessive and impoverished.'

(b) 'Love and jealousy in the early modern period are two sides of the same coin.'

(c) 'Cervantes's *Persiles y Sigismunda* represents the allegorical journey of two lovers which closes with a celebration of Counterreformation ideology'.

### Playing the Devil

4 Answer **one** of the following with reference to **two or more** of the authors **and two or more** of the primary texts studied for this topic:

(a) 'The Devil's personality cannot be contained within the boundaries of a positive or negative definition. Depending on the context, he can be either an angel of justice and freedom or a deceiving creature, father of all human errors.'

(b) 'Despite all the myths surrounding his unlimited cunningness and knowledge, the Devil is the ultimate buffoon in early modern thought.'

(QUESTION 4 OVERLEAF)

(c) \* Write a critical commentary on the following passage from *El condenado por desconfiado*:

*Enrico*

|  |    |
|--|----|
| A treinta desventurados<br>yo solo y a queste acero,<br>que es de la muerte ministro,<br>del mundo sacado habemos.                                       |    |
| Los diez muertos por mi gusto,<br>y los veinte me salieron<br>una con otra a doblón.   | 5  |
| ¿Diréis que es pequeño precio?<br>Es verdad; mas, ¡voto a Dios!,<br>que en faltándome el dinero,<br>que mate por un doblón<br>a cuántos me están oyendo. | 10 |
| Seis doncellas he forzado.<br>¡Dichoso llamarme puedo<br>pues seis he podido hallar<br>en este felice tiempo!  | 15 |
| De una principal casada<br>me aficioné; ya resuelto<br>habiendo entrado en su casa,<br>a ejecutar mi deseo,  | 20 |
| dio voces, vino el marido,<br>y yo, enojado y resuelto,<br>llegué con él a los brazos,<br>y tanto en ellos le aprieto,<br>que perdió tierra; y apenas    | 25 |
| en este punto le veo,<br>cuando de un balcón le arrojo,<br>y en el suelo cayó muerto.<br>Dio voces la tal señora;  |    |
| y yo, sacando el acero,<br>le metí cinco o seis veces<br>en el cristal de su pecho<br>donde puertas de rubíes<br>en campos de cristal bellos             | 30 |
| le dieron salida al alma<br>para que se fuese huyendo.<br>Por hacer mal solamente,<br>he jurado juramentos<br>falsos, fingiendo quimeras,                | 35 |
| hecho máquinas, enredos.   | 40 |

(TURN OVER)

**Rewriting the Conquest of Mexico**

- 5 Answer **one** of the following with reference to **two or more** of the authors studied for this topic:
- (a) 'There is little difference between biography and history in texts on the conquest of Mexico.'
  - (b) 'The category of the eyewitness is deceptively simple: experience alone is not a source of narrative authority.'
  - (c) 'To narrate an event like the conquest of Mexico is inevitably to write an apologia, a defense of conduct.'

**END OF PAPER**