MODERN AND MEDIEVAL LANGUAGES TRIPOS Part IB

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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 SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

*20 Page Answer Book x 1 None*

*Rough work pad*

*Tags*

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| **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** |

SECTION A

**Foundations, Identity, Difference**

1. ‘Existía el libro original, escrito antiguamente pero su vista está oculta al investigador y al pensador.’ (*Popol Vuh*)

In the light of this quotation, discuss the difficulties involved in accessing or interpreting ‘foundational’ texts. Your answer should refer to **two or more** works, at least **one** of which should be from the Colonial period.

1. ‘The idea of a foundational narrative is an oxymoron, since narrative is of its nature polemical, hybrid, partial – in short, more invention than foundation.’

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

1. ‘Ariel, genio del aire, representa la parte noble y alada del espíritu, el imperio de la razón y del sentimiento sobre los bajos estímulos de la irracionalidad, rectificando en el hombre superior los tenaces vestigios de Calibán, símbolo de sensualidad y de torpeza.’ (RODÓ)

In the light of this quotation, discuss the importance of this or similar oppositions in **two or more** works you have studied for this topic.

1. ‘En muchos casos la representación testimonial o literaria de las diferencias étnicas o raciales promulga, a pesar de las buenas intenciones, una ideología imperialista o nacionalista de la subyugación.’

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

1. Examine the importance of and relationship between **three** of the following in **two or more** works you have studied for this topic:

*(a)* miscegenation; *(d)* subalternity;

*(b)* surrogacy; *(e)* language;

*(c)* sexuality; *(f)* testimony.

1. ‘America existed as a legal document before it was physically discovered.’

In the light of this assertion, examine the role played by juridical and legal discourse in **two or more** Latin American narratives or historical sources.

SECTION B

**Topics in Latin American Culture and History**

**Representing the City**

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

*(a)* ‘La Ciudad caótica de frenéticos muñecos con cuerda se me ocurría una infantil fantasmagoría sin peso ni realidad. La realidad era esta otra: subterránea, ciega, sorda.’

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

*(b)* ‘La ciudad produce héroes al revés, héroes repugnantes y negros, pero héroes.’

Discuss.

*(c)* Discuss the importance of and relationship between **three** of the following in **two or more** urban texts:

*(i)* monsters; *(iv)* language;

*(ii)* mannequins or dolls; *(v)* blindness;

*(iii)* machines; *(vi)* death.

**Charting Revolution**

8 Discuss **one** of the following with reference to **two or more** texts (which may include cultural or historical sources):

*(a)* ‘En la Revolución mexicana, las voces menores irrumpen caóticamente en el escenario de la historia. Estas obras son apenas un intento provisorio de registrar los efectos y el significado de tal irrupción.’

*(b)* ‘These works insistently translate class struggle into family feuds and conflict between (pseudo) fathers and (pseudo) sons. This is both their fascination and their limitation.’

*(c)* ‘Economic forces were ultimately more powerful than ideology in the origins and outcomes of the Mexican Revolution.’

(TURN OVER)

**Penning the Dictator**

9 Answer **one** of the following with reference to **two or more** texts (which may include cultural or historical sources):

*(a)* ‘Verbal depletion (e.g. censorship, amnesia, aphasia) and verbal inflation (e.g. flights of fancy, linguistic experimentation, neo-Baroque allegory) are amongst the most powerful ways in which the trauma of dictatorship and oppression is figured.’

Discuss.

*(b)* ‘No se puede hacer arte o literatura del horror inenarrable de las desapariciones y la tortura. Sin embargo, hay que hacer arte, hay que escribir, para convertir el silencio en memoria.’

How applicable is this dilemma to works you have studied for this topic?

*(c)* Assess the relative importance of national politics and geopolitical interests in **one or two** dictatorships or periods of authoritarian rule in Latin America.

**Labyrinths of Fiction**

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

*(a)* ‘Enigmatic, opaque, or demanding narratives at once point to and turn from the tumult of history.’

*(b)* ‘El tema del *Doppelgänger* o del monstruo apunta hacia la irrupción de algo vedado o reprimido en el orden racional y en las estructuras represivas de identidad, familia o clase.’

*(c)* ‘These fictions twist time and space into labyrinths in order to reveal the illusory nature of the structures that give meaning and solidity to human existence.’

**END OF PAPER**