

DRAM 201: Final Exam Study Questions

The Questions in Part C of the Exam will be drawn from the following questions:

Several plays in the course stage the struggle between the material world, and the world of the mind or the spirit. Drawing specific examples from *Everyman*, *Matsukaze*, and *Life is a Dream*, compare how characters in each play are encouraged to renounce the material world in favour of an alternate conception of 'truth.' What lesson(s) do these plays aim to teach the audience through the struggles that they stage?

The parabasis is a key feature of Aristophanic comedy, but 'messages' are delivered directly to the audience in many plays of different traditions. Explain the function of the parabasis in *The Frogs*, and compare it to two of the following: Cleante's moral statements in *Tartuffe* (esp. Act 1 Sc 5); *Periplectomenus*' beliefs about morality and manners in *Miles Gloriosus* (p. 161-2); lessons delivered by allegorical figures in *Everyman*. How do the message(s) relate to the broader aims of each play's genre?

Satire exhibits a critical view of a social practice or human vice. Referring to *The Frogs*, *The Jealousy of Isabella*, and *Miles Gloriosus*, compare and contrast how each play uses satire to achieve comedic ends. Paying particular attention to role reversal, discuss how satire functions as social commentary, and what it attempts to communicate to the audience.

Shakespeare's Rosalind can be seen to 'perform' gender in a variety of ways, for a number of different purposes. Outline the different ways that Rosalind performs gender, and compare how characters in two of the following plays either fulfill or challenge gender-based expectations: *Dulcitius*, *The Jealousy of Isabella*, *The Oresteia*. Is gender treated as 'essential' or 'performed' in each case? How does each play's treatment of gender factor into the broader aims of the play's genre?

Fate and/or prophecy shape the worldview of several plays on the course. With reference to *Life is a Dream*, *Everyman*, and *Matsukaze*, discuss how characters either adhere to prophecy or reject it, and how this decision shapes the characters' ultimate fate. How do spiritual views of the afterlife shape the relationship between the character and his or her fate?

Compare how self-knowledge brings about a happy ending in three of the following plays: *Everyman*, *As You Like It*, *Life is a Dream*, *Dulcitius*, *Tartuffe*, *Matsukaze*. Paying attention to the different goals of comedy and tragedy, explain how individual self-knowledge in these plays is meant to translate into social change.

Religious piety is often characterized as a necessary element of leading a good life. *The Oresteia*, *Dulcitius*, and *Tartuffe* all address piety directly in their narratives, but at the same time, they all question the function of piety in society. Examine how these plays represent piousness while also complicating the societal outcome of piety.

Discuss why it is crucial to suspend your disbelief in order to understand the following plays: *As You Like It*, *Matsukaze*, and *Everyman*. What aspects of belief are challenged by the theatrical devices and moral worldviews in each of these plays? How does the theatrical form of each play help to deliver its message?