

**MASTER OF ARTS EXAMINATION 2019**  
**ENGLISH**  
**FIRST YEAR, FIRST SEMESTER**  
**IDEA OF THE MODERN 1: RENAISSANCE, REFORM, REVOLUTION**

Time: Two hours

Full Marks: 30

Answer any three questions. All questions carry equal marks.

1. 'Revisionary approaches to the Renaissance reveal that Europe emerged in close relation rather than stark opposition to the cultures it has often demonized as underdeveloped and uncivilized'. Discuss with adequate references.
2. "Petrarch's description of his climb of Mount Ventoux combines the sense of tactile difficulty with moral allegory." Discuss.
3. How does the thought experiment undertaken by Descartes aid him in arriving at his fundamental proposition "Cogito ergo sum" in the texts you have read? Why is he generally regarded as the 'Father of Modern Philosophy'?
4. Examine how Boccaccio connects the plague and desire through a nexus of thematic and linguistic similarities. Explain how this connection amplifies any reading of the actions of the 'lieta brigata' in the *Decameron*.
5. Examine the nature of Montaigne's scepticism with special reference to his essay *Apology for Raymond Sebond*.
6. 'The literature of travel not only exemplifies the multiple facets of modern identity, but it is also one of the principal cultural mechanisms, even a key cause, for the development of modern identity since the Renaissance.' Discuss early modern accounts of travel and their motives in the light of the above statement.
7. Discuss how Donne brings in political concerns in his love elegies.
8. With special attention to the Gloucester-Edgar plot, consider critically the possibility of reading *King Lear* as a dark farce.
9. Comment on the use and abuse of history in Machiavelli's *Il Principe*.
10. In what ways does Joan Kelly interrogate the idea of the Renaissance? Discuss with illustrations from her essay.
11. The ending of *Samson Agonistes* asks more questions than it answers. Discuss.