

**ST CATHERINE'S COLLEGE, OXFORD and ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.**

**MODERN LANGUAGES (SPANISH) & JOINT SCHOOLS WITH MODERN LANGUAGES  
(SPANISH)**

Before you come up, you need to do **four things**.

**First:** read the prescribed texts for the Preliminary Examination. These are listed below, under Paper III and Paper IV (Papers I and II describe the language work you will be doing). You will help yourself enormously if you have gone through them carefully at least once before your arrival.

The texts in Paper III offer an introduction to narrative prose (novels, short stories) from different periods and countries in the Spanish-speaking world. This paper is examined by essay.

The works studied for Paper IV, which provide examples of poetry and drama from different historical periods, are set for closer textual analysis than those studied for Paper IV, and you will have to write commentaries on passages from them in the examination.

**Paper III:** Candidates will be required to write three essays in the examination.

Miguel de Cervantes. 'Rinconete y Cortadillo', from vol. 1 of *Novelas ejemplares* (ed. H. Sieber, 2 vols. Cátedra, 1989 ISBN: 9788437602219)

Nellie Campobello. *Cartucho: Relatos de la lucha en el Norte de México* (Madrid: Cátedra, 2019 ISBN-10: 8437634326)

Alejo Carpentier. *El reino de este mundo* (Barcelona: Austral, 2015 ISBN-10: 8432224952)

Ana María Matute. *Primera memoria* (Destino, 2010 ISBN: 9788423343591)

**Paper IV:** Candidates will also be required to write three commentaries in the exam, each on a different text.

*El romancero viejo* (ed. M. Díaz Roig, Cátedra, Madrid, 1979/1997 ISBN: 9788437600802) – see Appendix (below) for full list of poems to study.

Pedro Calderón de la Barca. *El médico de su honra* (ed. D. W. Cruickshank, Clásicos Castalia ISBN 13: 9788497403757)

Golden Age Sonnets – selection to be made available online via Canvas (the University's 'Virtual learning environment').

Federico García Lorca, *Doña Rosita la soltera* (ed. Mario Hernández Sánchez, Alianza, 2013 ISBN: 9788420675725)

César Vallejo. *Los heraldos negros* (ed. René de Costa, 2004, Cátedra ISBN: 9788437616698)

**[For Sole Spanish Students Only:**

**Paper XI: Further Topics I**

*Introduction to Hispanic Film Studies*

*Cría Cuervos* (dir. Carlos Saura, 1976)

*Volver* (dir. Pedro Almodóvar, 2006)

*Memorias del subdesarrollo* (dir. Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, 1967)

*Camila* (dir. María Luisa Bemberg, 1984)

John King, *Magical Reels* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London: Verso, 2000)

**Paper XII: Further Topics II**

*Introduction to Spanish Medieval Studies*

*Lírica española de tipo popular: Edad Media y Renacimiento*, ed. Margit Frenk Alatorre.

Letras Hispánicas, 60. Madrid: Cátedra, 1978 [extracts] – set edition

*Sendebiar*, ed. María Jesús Lacarra. Letras Hispánicas, 304. Madrid: Cátedra, 1989 – set edition

Jorge Manrique, *Coplas por la muerte de su padre*, in *Poesía*, ed. by María Morrás. Clásicos Castalia, 271. Madrid: Castalia, 2003 – set edition

Diego de San Pedro, *Cárcel de amor* ed. by Carmen Parrilla, with a study by Alan Deyermond. Biblioteca Clásica, 17. Barcelona: Crítica, 1995 – set edition

**Paper XIII: Further Topics III**

*Introduction to Short Fiction in Spanish*

Miguel de Cervantes, *Novela del celoso extremeño*, in *Novelas ejemplares*, vol. II, ed. Juan Bautista Avallé-Arce (Madrid: Castalia, 1987) – set edition

María de Zayas y Sotomayor, *El prevenido engañado*, in *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, ed. Julián Olivares (Madrid: Cátedra, 2000) – set edition

Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer, 'Maese Pérez el organista: Leyenda sevillana' in *Rimas y Leyendas*, ed. Francisco López Estrada and María Teresa López García-Berdoy (Madrid: Espasa, 2010) – set edition

Benito Pérez Galdós, 'La novela en el tranvía', in *Cuentos fantásticos*, ed. Alan E. Smith (Madrid: Cátedra, 2004) – set edition

José María Merino, 'Acechos cercanos' 'Otra historia navideña', 'Lejanías', 'De fauna doméstica', 'Ensoñaciones', 'La memoria confusa', 'Ecosistema', 'Terapia', 'De vacas cuerdas', 'Reunión conmemorativa', 'Cien', in *La glorieta de los fugitivos* (Madrid: Páginas de Espuma, 2007) – set edition

Julio Cortázar, 'Continuidad de los parques', 'Las babas del diablo', 'La isla a mediodía', in *Final del juego* (Madrid: Santillana, 2009) and *Siete cuentos*, ed. Peter Beardsell

(Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999) – set edition

Juan Rulfo, 'Nos han dado la tierra', 'Es que somos muy pobres', 'El hombre', in *El llano en llamas*, ed. Françoise Perus (Madrid: Cátedra, 2016) – set edition ]

**Second:** improve your knowledge of the Spanish language. Read, for example, articles in a good newspaper, such as *El País*. Arm yourself with a good grammar and dictionary. I recommend the following:

John Butt, Carmen Benjamin and Antonia Moreira Rodríguez, *A New Reference Grammar of Modern Spanish*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition (Routledge, 2018). This is the standard work

For revision: John Butt, *Oxford Spanish Grammar* (Oxford, 1996)

Also valuable: R. E. Batchelor and C. J. Pountain, *Using Spanish: A Guide to Contemporary Usage* (Cambridge, 1992)

and R. E. Batchelor, *Using Spanish Synonyms* (Cambridge, 1994)

The best bilingual dictionary is:

*The Oxford Spanish Dictionary*, fourth edition (2008)

The Real Academia Española also has a monolingual dictionary available online:

<http://dle.rae.es/?id=DglqVCc>

In the Preliminary examinations there are two language papers:

- I Translation into Spanish of a passage of modern English prose and a selection of sentences in English (to test in particular grammatical accuracy).
- II Translation into English of two passages of contrasting modern Spanish prose.

**Third:** acquire a knowledge of literary theory and of the background to Spanish studies. The following books will help you [**NB. THESE ARE SUGGESTIONS – YOU NEED NOT READ ALL OF THEM, NOR DO YOU NEED TO READ THEM COVER TO COVER**]:

Terry Eagleton, *How to Read Literature* (Yale, 2014)

John Mullan, *How Novels Work* (Oxford, 2006)

Roberto González Echevarría and Enrique Pupo-Walker (eds), *The Cambridge History of Latin American Literature*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1996)

T. S. Eliot, *Selected Prose* (Penguin, 1963)

Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton, 1957)

Suzanne Keen, *Narrative Form* (New York, 2003)

P. E. Russell (ed), *Spain: A Companion to Spanish Studies* (London: Methuen, 1973)

R. Wellek and A. Warren, *Theory of Literature* (Penguin, 1973)

Various Authors, *A Literary History of Spain*, 8 vols. (London: Ernest Benn, 1971-85)

**Fourth:** spread your wings and acquire a good cultural general knowledge. Classic works like Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis* (Princeton, 1953) or William Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930, Pimlico 2004) are worth browsing through.

I recommend particularly:

One of the great Greek or Latin epics of Homer and Virgil (in translation - of which there are many): the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, or the *Aeneid*.

Shakespeare: *Othello*, *Hamlet*, *The Tempest*, *King Lear*; the Sonnets.

The Bible: especially Genesis; Exodus, chapters 1-15; the Song of Solomon; the Four Gospels.

You should also acquire a grounding in Spanish history and culture. I recommend:

J.H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain, 1469-1716* (Penguin, 1963)

J.H. Elliott, *Spain and its World, 1500-1700* (Yale, 1986)

R. Fraser, *Blood of Spain* (Pantheon, 1979)

P.E. Russell (ed), *Spain: A Companion to Spanish Studies* (see above)

And at least a nodding acquaintance with that of Latin America. Read, for example,

E. Williamson, *The Penguin History of Latin America* (Penguin, 2009)

Ben Bollig,  
Fellow and Tutor in Spanish (Catz),  
Associate College Lecturer in Spanish (St John's)  
August 2023.  
[benjamin.bollig@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk](mailto:benjamin.bollig@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk)

**Appendix – Paper IV, List of Medieval Ballads for Detailed Study**

Díaz Roig edition [corresponding numbers]

1. Romance del cerco de Baeza [1]
2. De la salida del rey Chico de Granada y de Reduán [3]
3. Romance del moro de Antequera [5]
4. La mañana de San Juan [6]
5. Caballeros de Moclín [7]
6. Romance de Abenámar [8]
7. Romance de Álora la bien cercada [9]
8. Romance de la pérdida de Alhama [14]
9. Romance de Sayavedra [18]
10. Seducción de la Cava [38]
11. Visión del rey Rodrigo [40]
12. Por las riberas de Arlanza [44]
13. Doña Lambra con fantasía [50]
14. Pártese el moro Alicante [52]
15. Romance del Cid Ruy Díaz [54]
16. Romance del juramento que tomó el Cid al rey don Alfonso [66]
17. Romance del rey moro que perdió Valencia [68]
18. Lanzarote y el ciervo [72]
19. Cata Francia, Montesinos [76]
20. Romance de Valdovinos [86]
21. Romance de doña Alda [94]
22. Romance del prisionero [97 and 97a]
23. Romance de Fontefrida [99]
24. Romance de Espinelo [110]
25. Yo me era mora Moraima [111]
26. De Francia partió la niña [117]
27. Romance de blanca niña [121]
28. Romance de la gentil dama y el rústico pastor [125]
29. Romance del cautivo [127]
30. El Conde Arnaldos [128]