

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON**

University of London

**EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS**

For The Following Qualification:—

*B.A.*

**The Modern Period I**

**COURSE CODE : ENGLN51**

**DATE : 04-MAY-05**

**TIME : 10.00**

**TIME ALLOWED : 3 Hours**



3. Either: (a) How are time and history represented in *Between the Acts*?
- Or: (b) The fascination with words, their depth and instability of reference, their capacity to survive into new circumstances, their interplay of allusion, is central to Woolf's examination of community.

(Gillian Beer)

Use this comment as a starting-point for an essay on Virginia Woolf's use of language.

4. Either: (a) It is a demonstration of the force of power and an attack on the force of power, it is a hymn to youth and a meditation on old age.

(François Truffaut)

Write on *Citizen Kane* in the light of Truffaut's comment, or of part of it.

- Or: (b) I believe that the cinema should be essentially poetic; that is why, during the shooting and not during the preparation, I try to plunge myself into a poetic development, which differs from narrative development and dramatic development.

(Orson Welles, 1966)

Write on 'poetic development' in Welles's cinema.

## SECTION B

5. How does any dramatist of the period respond to and criticize social conventions?
6. The vocabulary of classic nineteenth-century imperial culture is plentiful with words and concepts like 'inferior' or 'subject races', 'subordinate peoples', 'dependency', 'expansion', and 'authority'.
- (Edward Said)
- Discuss the role of one or more of these concepts in literary representations of colonialism in the period.
7. H.G. Wells wrote in 1914 that 'formerly there was a feeling of certitude about moral values and standards of conduct that is altogether absent today.' In the light of his statement, write an essay on two or more works of the period.
8. Compare a work written before 1914 with a work written after 1918.

CONTINUED

9.                   **Within the breath of autumn woods,  
Within the winter silences:  
Thy venomous spirit stirs and broods,  
O master of impieties!**

(Lionel Johnson, 'The Dark Angel', 1893)

To what extent is *fin-de-siècle* literature preoccupied with 'impieties'?

10. Compare the ways in which two or more authors of the period represent urban experience.
11. 'Chasing yesterdays is a bum show' (Hemingway). Write on attitudes to the past in some works of the period.
12. Discuss representations of racial tension in any literary works of the period.
13.                   A native of the United States clings to this world's goods as if he were certain never to die; and he is so hasty in grasping at all within his reach, that one would suppose he was constantly afraid of not living long enough to enjoy them. He clutches everything, he holds nothing fast, but soon loosens his grasp to pursue fresh gratifications.

Apply Alexis De Tocqueville's statement of 1840 to writing of the modern period in any way you find interesting.

14. Virginia Woolf, in *A Room of One's Own*, claimed that

women have served all these centuries as looking-glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size.

How relevant is Woolf's claim to literary works of the period? Answer with reference to at least two works.

15. Maxim Gorky wrote of the cinema after seeing the Lumières' first cinematograph programme in Russia in 1896, 'It is not life but its shadow, it is not motion but its soundless spectre.' Taking this remark as a starting-point, write an essay on cinema in the period.
16. How does the work of any author of the period represent the life of the senses?

TURN OVER

17. **Instead of narrative method, we may now use the mythical method. It is, I seriously believe, a step towards making the modern world possible for art.**

(T.S. Eliot, '*Ulysses, Order and Myth*', 1923)

**What did the use of myth make possible in one or more works of the period?**

18. **Characterise the consciousness of national or regional tradition in the work of one or more poets of the period.**

19. **He is fulfilling the counterpart of labour – the machine works him, instead of he the machine. He enjoys the mechanical motion, in his own body.**

(D.H. Lawrence, *Women in Love*)

**Discuss representations of labour, or of technology, in one or more works of the period.**

20. **I regard writing not as investigation of character, but as an exercise in the use of language, and with this I am obsessed. I have no technical psychological interest. It is drama, speech, and events that interest me.**

(Evelyn Waugh)

**Discuss the relation between character and the use of language in the work of Evelyn Waugh or of any other comic author of the period.**

21. **What Mr. Faulkner is after, in a sense, is a *continuum*. He wants a medium without stops or pauses, a medium which is always *of the moment*, and of which the passage from moment to moment is as fluid and undetectable as in the life itself which he is purporting to give.**

(Conrad Aiken)

**Write on the significance of style in the treatment of time by any author of the period.**

22. **The men who came out of the war were weary, but only of worn shibboleths; they had energy enough to build new art based on rejection of the pre-war heritage. Everything had to be re-made – the language of literature, the sonorities of music, the phenomenography of the visual arts.**

(Anthony Burgess)

**Consider one or more examples of artistic re-making in the period from 1918.**

23. **Discuss how any works of the period respond to notions of 'folk' culture or of 'popular' culture.**

CONTINUED

24. I sit in one of the dives  
On Fifty-second street  
Uncertain and afraid  
As the clever hopes expire  
Of a low dishonest decade.

(W.H. Auden, 'September 1, 1939')

How are hope and disappointment reflected in any works of the period which respond to historical situations?

25. 'She's always cold,' Maudie said. 'She can't help it. She was born in a hot place. She was born in the West Indies or somewhere, weren't you, kid? The girls call her the Hottentot.'

(Jean Rhys, *Voyage in the Dark*, 1934)

Discuss how any one or more works of the period depict relations between England and the British Empire.

26. How did any one or more authors of the period meet the challenge of representing the modern experience of war?
27. 'The mind receives a myriad impressions – trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel' (Virginia Woolf, 'Modern Fiction'). Discuss representations of the mind or of consciousness in one or more works of the period.
28. Discuss how any writer of the period modifies the form of the short story.
29. To what extent can the formal innovations of literary modernism be compared with developments in the visual arts?
30. The fiction of Dorothy Richardson, Katherine Mansfield, and Virginia Woolf created a deliberate female aesthetic, which applied the cultural analysis of the feminists to words, sentences and structures of language in the novel.

With Elaine Showalter's claim in mind, discuss the creation of a 'female aesthetic' in the work of any woman writer of the period.

31. Mary Ann Caws has called the twentieth century 'a century of Isms'. Discuss the importance of any one 'Ism' in the early twentieth century.

**TURN OVER**

32. Was there ever a novel more coarse? I assure you I hadn't gone very far when I had to put it down.

(Ronald Firbank, *The Flower Beneath the Foot*)

Discuss the representation of coarseness, or of sex, in at least two works of the period.

33. Policeman: It's heavy. What is it?  
Sam Spade: The, er, stuff that dreams are made of.  
Policeman: Huh?

(Last lines of John Huston's 1941 film *The Maltese Falcon*)

Consider the stuff of dreams, or the use of dreams, in some works of the period.

34. We of the sinking middle class. . . may sink without further struggles into the working class where we belong, and probably when we get there it will not be so dreadful as we feared, for after all, we have nothing to lose but our aitches.

(George Orwell)

Discuss class mobility, or class struggle, in two or more works of the period.

35. Recording fixes sights and sounds, and segments of living time, making them available for storage so they can be brought out and replayed at will.

Taking V.F. Perkins's statement as a starting-point, explore some of the artistic implications of advances in recording technology in the period.

36. Modern tragi-comic fiction does not offer a guarantee of reliable knowledge; yet paradoxically, it continues to believe in the revelation of character, continues to believe that the attempt to know a character is worthwhile, even if it is beautifully frustrated.

In the light of James Wood's claim, write an essay on revelation of character and frustration of knowledge in works of the period.

37. With reference to at least two works, write about one of the following: architecture, unemployment, the State, maternity, mass production, advertising, provincial life, revolution, the Depression, settlers, detectives, bureaucracy, space.

38. Write about the use in the period of one of the following forms: the literary essay, the review, the diary, the letter, the elegy, the epic, the monologue, pulp fiction, song lyrics, verse drama, the libretto, the documentary.

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