

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON**

University of London

**EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS**

For The Following Qualification:--

*B.A.*

**The Modern Period I**

**COURSE CODE : ENGLN51**

**DATE : 10-MAY-06**

**TIME : 14.30**

**TIME ALLOWED : 3 Hours**

## Modern Literature I

Time: 3 hours

Answer three questions, one from Section A and two from Section B. In Section B, 'work' and 'works' include drama and film as well as fiction, and other varieties of prose and poetry; 'authors' includes those producing work in all these forms; and 'the period' means 1890-1945. If an author of the period produced significant works before or after the period, you may discuss those works, but you should base your answer on works produced within the period.

Candidates may include in Section B discussion of works by the authors of the set texts not used in answering Section A. For example, if you have not answered on *In Our Time* in Section A, and choose to answer on Hemingway in Section B, you may include *In Our Time* in your discussion. If you have written your Section A answer on *In Our Time*, you may refer to Hemingway's works in answering a question in Section B, providing you do not base your answer primarily on Hemingway.

Candidates must not present substantially the same material in any two answers, whether in this paper or in other parts of the examination.

### SECTION A

1. Yeats's endeavour was not only to create an Irish literature independent of the imperial, empirical sway of Britain; it was also an attempt to launch upon the world a vision of reality that possessed no surer basis than the ground of his own imagining.

(Seamus Heaney)

Consider Yeats's poetry in the light of this quotation.

2. 'He did not want to have to do any courting. He did not want to tell any more lies ... He did not want any consequences' (description of the returned soldier Krebs in 'Soldier's Home', *In Our Time*).

Write an essay on negatives or refusal in Hemingway. You may, if you wish, confine yourself to *In Our Time*.

3. '*Between the Acts* is preoccupied with communal survival, even as it glances across individual loss' (Gillian Beer).

Write about communal survival, or individual loss, or both, in Woolf's work. You may if you wish, confine yourself to *Between the Acts*.

TURN OVER

4. There have been many motion pictures and novels rigorously obeying the formula of the 'success story'. I wished to make a picture which might be called a 'failure story'.

(Orson Welles on *Citizen Kane*)

Write an essay about failure in Welles. You may, if you wish, confine yourself to *Citizen Kane*.

## SECTION B

5. 'You mustn't look in my novel for the old stable ego of the character' (D.H. Lawrence). Consider the fate of the 'old stable ego of the character' in two or more works of the period.
6. 'I want a new civilization' (Ezra Pound). Write an essay on desires, or demands, for the future that you have found in one or more authors of the period.
7. 'All a poet can do today is warn' (Wilfred Owen, 1918). Consider the ways in which any poet or poets of the period attempted to warn.
8. One cannot repeat too often that what makes the work of art is the force of the sentiment that an individual fixed in it, & eternizes in it: nature is only the arsenal, always open, where he goes to look for his means of expression.

(Thomas Hardy)

Discuss with relation to the poetry of Hardy, or that of any other poet or poets of the period.

9. In general, the allusions in *The Waste Land* disperse clear meanings into other contexts, undermine the notion of authentic speaking, and blur boundaries between texts.

(Harriet Davidson)

Write an essay on allusion in Eliot or in any other author or authors of the period.

CONTINUED

10. What our eyes behold may well be the text of life but one's meditations on the text and the disclosures of these meditations are no less a part of the structure of reality.

(Wallace Stevens)

Use this quotation as a starting point for an essay on the work of Stevens, or that of any other author, or authors, of the period.

11. I began to like New York, the racy adventurous feel of it at night and the satisfaction that the constant flicker of men and women and machines give to the restless eye.

(F. Scott Fitzgerald)

Use this quotation as a starting point for an essay on the representation of urban experience in two or more works of the period.

12. In olden days, a glimpse of stocking  
Was looked on as something shocking  
Now, Heaven knows,  
Anything goes!

(Cole Porter, 'Anything Goes', 1934)

Discuss how at least two works of the period might be considered a reaction against too much freedom.

13. it was only after a long silence, when he said, in a hesitating voice, 'I suppose you fellows remember that I did once turn fresh-water sailor for a bit,' that we knew we were fated, before the ebb began to run, to hear about one of Marlow's inconclusive experiences.

(Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*)

Write an essay on story-telling, or 'inconclusive experiences', or both, in two or more works of the period.

14. Write on one of the following in relation to any dramatist of the period: sex, lies, politics, prostitution, alcohol, manual labour, suicide, wit.

TURN OVER

15. What had she to do with parents and antecedents? She knew herself new and unbegotten, she had no father, no mother, no anterior connections.

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

Consider the rejection of parents, or antecedents, in two or more works of the period.

16. The Victorian fin de siècle was an epoch of endings and beginnings ... a time fraught with anxiety and with an exhilarating sense of possibility.

(Sally Ledger and Roger Luckhurst)

Write an essay on endings and beginnings, or anxiety and possibility, in two or more works of the fin de siècle.

17. In 1912 James Weldon Johnson wrote of the 'generally accepted literary ideal of the American Negro' as 'an obstacle' to be faced. How did Weldon Johnson, or any other author or authors of the period, respond to this obstacle?

18. 'James's imagination was roused by questions of power' (Adrian Poole). How did James, or any other novelist or novelists of the period, confront 'questions of power'?

19. An empire is partly a fiction. No nation can close its hand around the world; the reach of any nation's empire always exceeds its final grasp.

(Thomas Richards)

Consider the 'fictions' of empire you have found in two or more works of the period.

20. Who is this New Woman, this epicene creature, this Gorgon set up by the snarly who impute to her the faults of both sexes while denying her the charm of either—where is she to be found if she exists at all?

(Sarah Grand, 1898)

Consider the contradictions surrounding images of women in two or more works of the period.

CONTINUED

21. According to Jonathan Dollimore:

deviancy isn't just a waste product of society ... nor is it intrinsic to the deviant subject. It is, rather, a construction, one which when analysed, says less and less about the individual deviant and more and more about the society.

In the light of this comment, write an essay on deviancy in some works of the period.

22. It pained him that he did not know well what politics meant and that he did not know where the universe ended. He felt small and weak.

(James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*)

Write an essay on the relations between the individual and the larger public world in two or more works of the period.

23. In *Ulysses*, Joyce indulges and multiplies random detail increasingly over the course of the book, straining the sustaining frame of the myth up to and through the breaking point.

(Vincent Sherry)

Either: (a) Use this quotation as a starting point for an essay on *Ulysses*.

Or: (b) Write an essay on two or more works from the period in which a 'breaking point' is reached.

24. The film is an infernal machine. Once it is ignited and set in motion, it revolves with enormous dynamism. It cannot pause. It cannot apologize. It cannot retract anything. It cannot wait for you to understand it. It cannot explain itself. It simply ripens to its inevitable explosion.

(Christopher Isherwood)

Taking this remark as a starting point, write an essay on cinema in the period.

TURN OVER

25. Gertrude Stein said that the portrait of her by Pablo Picasso was ‘the only reproduction of me which is always I, for me’.
- Either: (a) Write an essay on the influence of the visual arts on one or more Modernist authors.
- Or: (b) Consider the relation between reproduction and authenticity in two or more works of the period.
26. Henry James wrote to his brother William that his ambition was to write
- in such a way that it would be impossible to an outsider to say whether I am, at a given moment, an American writing about England or an Englishman writing about America.
- Write an essay on how exile was used by one or more authors of the period.
27. Write about the portrayal of the figure of the ‘good soldier’ in two or more works of the period.
28. ‘In that English countryside of my boyhood every human being had a “place”’ (H. G. Wells, *Tono-Bungay*). Consider the stability or instability of class placement, in two or more works of the period.
29. ‘Is Gatsby criminal or romantic? Criminal and romantic?’ (Tony Tanner). Write an essay on the relationship between the criminal and the romantic in some American literature of the period.
30. ‘The sex impulse has been the source of most troubles from Adam and Eve onwards’ (Bronislaw Malinowski). Consider troubles caused by the ‘sex impulse’ in two or more works of the period.
31. What relations have you found between high and popular culture in the period?
32. With reference to at least two works write about one of the following: Harlem, suburbia, adultery, incest, poverty, the nouveau-riche, world-weariness, darkness, vision, phonographs, airplanes, masks, manifestos, religion, the femme fatale, shellshock, ghosts, advertising, real estate.

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