

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

University of London

EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

For the following qualifications :-

B.A.

The Romantic Period

COURSE CODE : ENGLEN08

DATE : 09-MAY-02

TIME : 14.30

TIME ALLOWED : 3 hours

02-N0101-3-110

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TURN OVER

ROMANTIC PERIOD 2002

Answer three questions, including at least one from each section.

Answers to questions in Section A should refer to at least two authors. Answers to questions in Section B may, unless otherwise indicated, refer to a single author.

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

Section A

1. Our thoughts of everything at home are suspended, by our astonishment at the wonderful Spectacle which is exhibited in a Neighbouring and rival Country---what a Spectacle and what actors. England gazing with astonishment at the French struggle for Liberty and not knowing whether to blame or applaud!

(Edmund Burke in a letter of 1789)

Discuss the divergence of literary reactions to the French Revolution in English literature of the Romantic period.

2. Write an essay on simplicity in Romantic literature.
3. 'No object of Sense is sublime; but only so far as I make it a symbol of some Idea' (Coleridge). Discuss the relationship of 'ideas' to aesthetic design in some literature of the Romantic period.
4. 'Romance lives but in books. The goblin is driven from the heath, and the rainbow is robbed of its mystery' (Leigh Hunt, 1817). How did Romantic writing recover 'Romance'?
5. Discuss the importance to their writing of either the animosity or the friendship between two authors of the period.
6. How does the Orient figure in the Romantic imagination?
7. Compare the ways in which two or more writers imagine equality between the sexes.

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8. The unexpected newness of the thing, the profusion of original characters, the Scotch language, Scotch scenery, Scotch men and women, the simplicity of the writing, and the graphic force of the descriptions, all struck us with an electric shock of delight.

(Henry Cockburn, on first reading Scott's fiction)

Write an essay on the 'newness' of the 'Scotch' in literature of the Romantic period.

9. 'Poetry is most just to its own divine origin when it administers and breathes the spirit of religion' (Wordsworth, 1815). Discuss in relation to two or more writers of the period.
10. Examine the role of dreams or dreaming in the work of two or more writers of the period.
11. Every age has its own 'psychology' and its own explanations of the roots of human personality. What do you take those to be, as represented in literature of the Romantic period?
12. 'To imagine "the Romantic reader"' is to imagine what never was' (Stephen C. Behrendt). Discuss readership, or the pressures of the market on literature, or both, in the Romantic period.
13. Do women have a 'literature of their own' in the Romantic period?
14. Jonathan Bate has proposed 'Romantic ecology' as a useful concept for making sense of the Romantics' attitude to nature. How can we usefully 'relearn' our ideas about the Romantics and Nature?
15. 'Writers of revolutionary tendencies censure any symptoms of dangerous sensibility in their heroes' (Marilyn Butler). Write an essay on the relationship between 'sensibility' and 'revolutionary tendencies' in any two or more works of the period.

Section B

16. Fanny Burney's subtitle for her domestic novel, *Camilla*, was 'A Picture of Youth'. Discuss the 'pictures of youth' offered in fiction by Burney, or any other woman novelist of the period.
17. Were Godwin, Wollstonecraft and other so-called 'Jacobin novelists' imaginatively hindered or liberated by their political purposes? You may refer to the work of just one novelist.

CONTINUED

18. Godwin found in Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* 'a luxuriance of imagination, and a trembling delicacy of sentiment, that would have done honour to a poet'. Do you find these qualities, or others, in her writing?
19. In 1797 Coleridge wrote in a letter to a friend: 'I can contemplate nothing but parts, & parts are all *little!* My mind feels as if it ached to behold & know something *great!*'. Where, if anywhere, in his work does Coleridge fulfil this desire?
20. 'His Muse is distinguished by a proud humility' (Hazlitt on Wordsworth). Discuss.
21. 'Nothing could be clearer than the absurdity of her recent fancies ... How could she have so imposed on herself?' (*Northanger Abbey*). Why is Austen so interested in the making of mistakes?
22. 'A loose sally of the mind; an irregular undigested piece' (the definition of 'Essay' in Johnson's *Dictionary*). How does this description fit the work of any essayist of the Romantic period?
23. A man cannot say, 'I will compose poetry'. The greatest poet even cannot say it; for the mind in creation is as a fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness.

(Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry*)

Discuss this assertion with reference to Shelley's own poetry.

24. Discuss how any writer or writers of the period found creative opportunities in the activity of confession.
25. Is Peacock a writer at odds with his age?
26. Read patiently take not up this Book in an idle hour the consideration of these things is the whole duty of man & the affairs of life and death trifles sports of time these considerations business of eternity.

Blake made the above jottings in the margin of a volume he was reading in 1798. Consider the instructions with reference to Blake's own poetry.

27. 'I do not mean to like *Waverley* if I can help it' wrote Jane Austen in 1814. Write an essay on the differences of approach of the two great novelists of the Romantic age.

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28. Scott wrote of Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* (1764): 'this was the first attempt to found a tale of amusing fiction upon the ancient romances'. In what directions did Gothic literature move thereafter and what were its principal achievements?
29. Love, patriotism, valour, devotion, constancy, ambition---all are to be laughed at, disbelieved in, and despised! --- and nothing is really good but a succession of dangers to stir the blood, and of banquets and intrigues to soothe it again!

(Francis Jeffrey on Byron, 1822)

Discuss.

30. Either: (a) What use did Keats make of legends?
Or: (b) Discuss Keats's use of poetic form, or epistolary form, or both.
31. How did travel significantly influence any writer or writers of the period?
32. Write an essay on one of the following in literature of the period: imitation, parody and pastiche, the fragment, the autobiography, the personal letter. You may confine your essay to one writer.
33. Discuss the importance to any author or authors of the period of one of the following: Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Chatterton.
34. Is there any poet of the period apart from the famous six (Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Shelley, and Byron) whose work deserves to survive its time?
35. Write an essay on one of the following in the literary world of the Romantic period: the poet's wife, science, Germany.
36. What is distinctive about one of the following in literature of the period: drama, literary criticism, journalism?
37. How escapist were Romantic representations of a better world?

END OF PAPER