

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

University of London

EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

For The Following Qualification:–

B.A.

The Romantic Period

COURSE CODE : ENGLN08

DATE : 10-MAY-04

TIME : 10.00

TIME ALLOWED : 3 Hours

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

Answers to questions in Section A may, unless otherwise indicated, refer to one or more authors. Answers to questions in Section B should refer to at least two authors.

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. 'He made a world of his own' (T.S. Eliot on Blake). Discuss Blake's worldliness, or his other-worldliness, or both.
2. The ease and light-heartedness of my youth were forever gone. The voice of an irresistible necessity had commanded me to 'sleep no more'.

(Caleb in Godwin's *Things As They Are, or The Adventures of Caleb Williams*)

Reflect on the exploration of either compulsion, or culpability, in Godwin.

3. 'We reason deeply, when we forcibly feel' (Wollstonecraft, *Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark*). Discuss the relations between reason and feeling in Wollstonecraft's writings.
4. Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,
And has the nature of infinity.

(Wordsworth, *The Borderers*)

We live by admiration, hope and love.

(Wordsworth, *The Excursion*)

Make either or both of these quotations the starting point for an essay on Wordsworth.

5. 'I am not here, touch me, Mother, that I may be here' (Coleridge, *Opus Maximum*). Write an essay on the theme of either abandonment, or self-consciousness, in Coleridge's work.
6. Either: (a) Write an essay on Jane Austen and discrimination.
Or: (b) Write an essay on either parents or siblings in Jane Austen.

TURN OVER

7. If this author should not be supposed to have original genius in the highest degree, he has other qualities which supply its place so well, his materials are so rich and varied, and he uses them so lavishly, that the reader is no loser by the exchange.

(Hazlitt on Sir Walter Scott)

Assess Scott's achievement in the light of this comment.

8. Should Byron be considered primarily a comic writer?
9. 'A thing of beauty is a joy forever' (Keats, *Endymion*). Write an essay on the relationship between pleasure and time in Keats.
10. How does P. B. Shelley imagine freedom?
11. Either: (a) '*Frankenstein* is a novel about excess and transgression, but formally it is symmetrical, shapely, obviously ordered to a purpose' (Gary Kelly). Examine the relationship between structure and subject matter in Mary Shelley's work.
- Or: (b) Why does the creature look ugly to Victor Frankenstein when it comes to life and not when he is putting it together?
12. I am one of those who do not think that mankind are exactly governed by reason or a cool calculation of consequences. I rather believe that habit, imagination, sense, passion, prejudice, words make a strong and frequent diversion from the right line of prudence and wisdom.

(Hazlitt, 'The Main-Chance')

Characterise Hazlitt's achievement as an anatomist of the passions.

13. What is distinctively Romantic about the satire written in the period? You may confine your answer to the work of one writer.
14. Write an essay on the Romantic interest in immortality, referring to one or more authors of the period.

CONTINUED

15. Thou demandest what is love. It is that powerful attraction to all that we conceive, or fear, or hope beyond ourselves, when we find within our own thoughts the chasm of an insufficient void, and seek to awaken in all things that are, a community with what we experience within ourselves.

(P.B. Shelley, 'On Love')

Make this a starting point for an essay on love in Shelley or any other writer of the period.

16. Insofar as I give a higher meaning to what is ordinary, a mysterious appearance to what is customary, an infinite look to the finite, I am romanticizing.

(Novalis)

Is there any writer of the period who 'romanticizes' in the way Novalis describes?

17. Make a case for the importance of the poetry of one of the following writers: Burns, Clare, Crabbe, Barbauld, Hemans, Thomas Moore, Scott, Charlotte Smith, Southey.

Section B

18. 'I must not dream again; -- it spoils even reality' (Byron). Write an essay on the Romantic interest in dreams and visions.
19. What sorts of secrets do gothic novels explore?
20. 'Napoleon began a life of action because of his failure in literature' (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe). Examine the relationship between 'literature' and the 'life of action' in the writings of two or more authors of the period.
21. 'Women had reclaimed the language of the heart, and they put it to political purposes' (Fiona Robertson). Discuss two or more works of the period in the light of this proposition.
22. 'I've no great cause to love that spot of earth, / Which holds what *might have been* the noblest nation' (Byron on England). How are patriotic ideals, or patriotic disappointments, evoked in two or more works written in the period?
23. Assess the critique by one Romantic period writer of another.

TURN OVER

24. Romantic poems, novels and essays alike teach that the deeper assertions of the self come with a falling away of our usual interests or accustomed consciousness.

(David Bromwich)

Discuss, with reference to two or more authors of the period.

25. Such ghastly visions had I of despair
And tyranny, and implements of death,
And long orations which in dreams I pleaded
Before unjust tribunals, with a voice
Labouring, a brain confounded, and a sense
Of treachery and desertion in the place,
The holiest that I knew of, my own soul.

(Wordsworth, *The Prelude* 1805 text, X. 375-381)

Write an essay on the psychological impact of the French Revolution as expressed in two or more works of Romantic literature.

26. With reference to at least two authors, explore how far an engagement with Romantic letter-writing can deepen or even transform our understanding of the literary culture of the period.

27. There have not been many noblemen who have written poetry, or indeed anything else much to the purpose. They have been brought up in too artificial a state, with too many ready-made notions of superiority; and their lives have passed in a condition too easy, conventional, and to say the truth, vulgar.

(Leigh Hunt, 'Lord Byron')

Write an essay on Romantic attitudes to aristocracy, with reference to two or more authors.

28. Thou, straggler into loving arms,
Young climber up of knees,
When I forget thy thousand ways
Then life and all shall cease.

(Mary Lamb, 'Parental Recollections')

What variety do you find in the Romantic construction of childhood?

CONTINUED

29. But, on the one hand, as my self-accusation does not amount to a confession of guilt, so, on the other, it is possible that if it *did*, the benefit resulting to others, from the record of an experience purchased at so heavy a price, might compensate, by a vast overbalance, for any violence done to the feelings I have noticed, and justify a breach of the general rule.

(Thomas de Quincey, *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*)

Write an essay on either the use of confessional rhetoric, or the deployment of an autobiographical persona, or both, in any two or more writings of the period.

30. Cypress and ivy, weed and wallflower grown
Matted and massed together - hillocks heaped
On what were chambers - arch crushed, column strewn
In fragments ...

(Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* Canto III)

Write an essay on the Romantic interest in fragments, making reference to two or more writers of the period.

31. Discuss two or more Romantic writers who made interesting contributions to one of the following forms: the journal, the essay, the lecture, literary criticism, the drama.

END OF PAPER