

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

University of London

EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

For The Following Qualification:–

B.A.

The Romantic Period

COURSE CODE : ENGLN08

DATE : 18-MAY-05

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. 'To me, this world is all one continued vision of fancy or imagination' (Blake). Discuss some of the ways in which Blake represents 'this world' in visionary or imaginative terms.
2. Caleb is not, then, an objective narrator: he offers a flawed subjective view of the world. He is not simply a persecuted saint, or a harmless innocent: his curiosity opens a Pandora's box which infects him with its secrets.

(Mark Philp)

Do you agree with this assessment of Godwin's *Caleb Williams*?

3. As soon as I read your letters from Norway, the cold awe which the philosopher has excited, was lost in the tender sympathy called forth by the woman.

(Amelia Alderson, in a letter to Mary Wollstonecraft)

How helpful is it to consider Mary Wollstonecraft's writing in terms of a conflict between reason and feeling?

4. Either: (a) Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

(Wordsworth, 'The Tables Turned')

Write an essay on Wordsworth's representation of Nature as a teacher.

- Or: (b) Byron wrote of Wordsworth attempting in *Lyrical Ballads* to show that 'Christmas stories tortured into rhyme / Contain the essence of the true sublime'. Discuss Wordsworth's poetry in the light of this remark.

TURN OVER

5. Write an essay on the sense of place, or travelling, or both, in Coleridge's poetry.
6. 'With Scott the Romantic movement, the movement of an extended curiosity and an enfranchised imagination, has begun' (R.L. Stevenson). Discuss Scott's work in the light of this remark.
7. 'My poem's epic' (Byron in *Don Juan*, Canto I). Is it?
8. Men have had every advantage of us in telling their own story. Education has been theirs in so much higher a degree; the pen has been in their hands. I will not allow books to prove anything.

(Anne Elliot, in *Persuasion*)

Either: (a) How far does Jane Austen vindicate the rights of women?

Or: (b) Write on the use of books in Jane Austen's novels.

9. 'I am by birth a Genevese; and my family is one of the most distinguished of that republic' (Victor Frankenstein). Write an essay on locations in *Frankenstein*.

10.

her dark and deepening eyes,
Which, as twin phantoms of one star that lies
O'er a dim well, move, though the star reposes,
Swam in our mute and liquid ecstasies,
Her marble brow, and eager lips, like roses,
With their own fragrance pale, which Spring but half uncloses.

(Shelley, *The Revolt of Islam*)

Write an essay on Shelley as a love poet.

11. 'Truth is many' (Hazlitt). Discuss the spirit of dialogue in Hazlitt's works.
12. Keats writes in 'Sleep and Poetry' of seeing 'shapes of delight, of mystery, and fear'. Discuss the evocation of delight, or mystery, or fear, or any combination of these, in Keats's poetry.

SECTION B

13. Write an essay on parent-child relationships in the work of one or more writers of the period.
14. How persuasive is Peacock's criticism of one or more of his contemporaries?

CONTINUED

15. A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw.

(Coleridge, 'Kubla Khan: Or, A Vision in a Dream')

But yesternight I prayed aloud
In anguish and in agony,
Up-starting from the fiendish crowd
Of shapes and thoughts that tortured me.

(Coleridge, 'The Pains of Sleep')

Discuss some representations of dreams, or nightmares, or both, in the writing of the period.

16. How do some writers of the period evoke the idea of national identity? You may consider writings in which authors express a sense of their own Englishness or Scottishness or Irishness or Welshness, or writings which deal with foreign nations (e.g. France, Germany, Italy, Greece, the East), or both.
17. Write about the idea of sublimity, either of human nature, or of external nature, or both, in some writing of the period.
18. What seems to you to be distinctively Romantic about some of the critical writing of the period?
19. Compare the representation of childhood in the work of any two authors of the period. You may include letters and essays.
20. 'I have bared my secret soul' (Rousseau, *Confessions*). Examine the rhetoric of revelation in some autobiographical writing of the period.
21. Which literary genre or sub-genre do you find to have been most provocatively or innovatively used in the period? Examples might be: the ode, the sonnet, the narrative poem, the hymn, the novel, the essay, the letter, the play, the speech.
22. What can Romantic letters tell us about the preoccupations of the period?
23. Write about the influence of one or more of the following on some Romantic writing: Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Pope. Do you consider such influence to have been a blessing or a curse?
24. Who won the revolutionary debate, in your opinion?
25. How did any female writer of the period attempt to distinguish her work from that of any one or more male writers, or from men's writing in general?

TURN OVER

26. To find that all was novelty and regeneration throughout the finest country in the universe, soon infected me with the system-forming spirit; and it was then that I conceived the plan I am now going to execute.

(Fanny Burney, *The Wanderer*)

Explore the influence of the French revolutionary ethos upon Romantic literature with reference to two or more works of the period.

27. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge: it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science.

(Wordsworth, Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*).

Discuss some of the causes and consequences of the grand claims being made for poetry in the Romantic period.

28. What is distinctive about Romantic representations of the tension between the city and the country?

29. The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives the following definitions for the adjective 'gothic':

1. Belonging to, or characteristic of, the Middle Ages; medieval, 'romantic' as opposed to classical.
2. Barbarous, rude, uncouth, unpolished, in bad taste. Of temper: savage.

How helpful are these in thinking about Romantic literature?

30. There are only two powers in the world: the sword and the mind. In the long run the sword is always defeated by the mind.

I have always enjoyed analysis, and if I were to be seriously in love, I would analyze my love bit by bit.

I am not a man like other men; the laws of morality and decorum could not be intended to apply to me.

Using one or more of these quotations from Napoleon Bonaparte as a starting-point, write an essay on Romantic subjectivity with reference to two or more writers of the period.

END OF PAPER