

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON**

University of London

**EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS**

For The Following Qualification:–

*M.A.*

**French G21: Literary Theory Take–Home Paper**

**COURSE CODE : FRENG021**

**COLLECT : 09-MAY-06, FROM 10 AM**

**RETURN : 11-MAY-06, BY 5 PM**

## MA IN FRENCH STUDIES

### LITERARY THEORY

*Answer THREE questions, EACH taken from a DIFFERENT SECTION of the paper.*

*You may answer in English or in French, but no special credit will be given for writing in French rather than in English.*

**DO NOT BASE YOUR ANSWERS ON THIS PAPER, OR AN ANSWER ON THIS PAPER AND ONE IN AN OPTION PAPER, OR YOUR DISSERTATION, ON THE SAME TEXT OR ON SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME MATERIAL.**

*No answer should be longer than 1500 words.*

*The examination lasts 55 hours (i.e. it begins at 10:00 a.m. on Day 1, and all answers must be returned by 5:00 p.m. on Day 3). **NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.***

*For further guidelines, see the MA information sheet: Take-home examination in Literary Theory.*

### SECTION A

1. In your view, what consequences do theories of the relation between ideology and consciousness have for theories of literature? Answer with reference to any TWO or MORE texts you have read for Block 1.
2. 'Le roman est le seul genre littéraire où l'éthique du romancier devient un problème esthétique de l'oeuvre.' (Goldman) Comment on this observation with reference to any ONE or MORE texts you have read for Block 1.
3. 'Marxist theories of literature inevitably privilege the realist novel over other literary forms.' Discuss this claim with reference to at least TWO of the texts you have studied in Block 1.
4. To what extent, in your view, do Gayatri Spivak's concepts of 'subalternity' and 'epistemic violence' have a wider relevance beyond the domain of postcolonial societies?
5. Compare the theorisation of the relationship between literature and history in at least TWO of the texts you have studied in this course.

**TURN OVER**

## SECTION B

6. Discuss Fanon's view that Sartre's 'Orphée noir' was a 'date in the intellectualization of the *experience* of being black'.
7. 'L'intellectuel est [...] le monstrueux produit de sociétés monstrueuses.' In the light of this remark, and with reference to Sartre's *Questions de méthode* AND/OR *Plaidoyer pour les intellectuels*, analyse and discuss the contradictions of the intellectual.
8. 'Le mythe donne aux objets une clarté qui n'est pas celle de l'explication, mais celle du constat.' Discuss. Your answer should be based on Barthes's 'Le mythe, aujourd'hui' AND TWO or MORE essays from *Mythologies*.
9. Discuss Michel Leiris's contention that the practice of ethnography is a form of colonialism.
10. 'Sartre thinks that Fanon's *Les Damnés de la terre* represents the moment of the boomerang: a returning violence that comes back to assail its perpetrators.' Discuss.

## SECTION C

11. 'The question posed by any structural account of discursive exchange is whether the idea of structure can account for any mobility within structure itself.' Discuss this observation comparatively by reference to any TWO texts you have read for Block 3.
12. 'Defamiliarization and conventionality, in the context of any theory of discourse, are incompatible ideas.' Discuss this observation comparatively by reference to any TWO texts you have read for Block 3.
13. 'An author is nothing but the idea of an author.' Discuss this observation comparatively by reference to any TWO texts you have read for Block 3.
14. 'Saussure's notion of the arbitrariness of the sign signifies the conventionality of the sign. As such, it confirms that humankind is a social and discursive construct.' Discuss this observation comparatively by reference to any TWO texts you have read for Block 3.
15. Examine comparatively the relation between nature and culture in any TWO texts you have read for Block 3.

**CONTINUED**

## SECTION D

16. 'Since Lacan mistrusts the imagination and the senses as cognitive tools, his writings on the imaginary are of little use in literary criticism.' Discuss.
17. 'The privileged position that Lacan awards to the phallus repeats and reinforces patriarchal ideologies.' Discuss.
18. 'Irigaray's "deux" is a form of resistance to gender exploitation, as well as to cultural appropriation of a variety of kinds. But it is also a utopia.' Comment on this observation with reference EITHER to *Etre deux* OR that text AND any other you have read for Block 4.
19. 'Any theory of the sign is simultaneously a theory of the body.' Discuss with reference to any ONE or MORE texts you have read for Block 4.
20. 'Notions of the imaginary have been developed to show illusions of psychic and cultural dominance. But without those illusions there would be no thought or language.' Discuss with reference to any ONE or MORE texts you have read ANYWHERE ON THIS COURSE.

**END OF PAPER**