

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

DEPARTMENT OF FRENCH

2004-2005

FREN4100 ARTHURIAN PROSE ROMANCE

Write TWO essays, ONE from each Section.

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

Please note that AT LEAST ONE option paper MUST be written in English.

DO NOT BASE BOTH ESSAYS IN THIS COURSE, OR AN ANSWER IN THIS COURSE AND ONE IN ANOTHER OPTION, ON THE SAME TEXT OR ON SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME MATERIAL.

You must refer to paragraphs 1 to 8 of the French Department's 'BA courses: Assessed Essays Booklet' for further information on the length of essays, how they are assessed, submission procedures and penalties for late submission, as well as for essay writing guidelines. Your attention is also drawn to the statement on 'Plagiarism and Non-originality' in that booklet and in the French Department Student Handbook.

Titles may be selected only from the following list: rewording of titles is not permitted.

SECTION A

1. 'Le Merlin de Robert de Boron est une création invraisemblable, composée de contradictions; à la fois homme sauvage et enfant prodige, fils de démon et conseiller royal, moqueur insultant et prophète inspiré.' In the light of these remarks, discuss Robert de Boron's conception of the figure of Merlin.
2. 'The fact that Lancelot never becomes the king he was born to be is crucial to understanding his presentation.' Discuss with reference to EITHER or BOTH volumes of *Lancelot du Lac*.
3. Discuss the structural and thematic functions of the quest in EITHER or BOTH volumes of *Lancelot du Lac*.

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4. 'The author of *La Queste del Saint Graal*, while making use of the conventional features of Arthurian romance, uses them to overturn the values of the Arthurian world.' Discuss.
5. '*La Mort le roi Artu* demonstrates the difficulty of reconciling medieval concepts of tragedy with Christian belief.'

SECTION B

6. Analyse and discuss the treatment of adultery in TWO or MORE texts you have studied on this course.
7. 'The way in which a text treats Gauvain reveals essential dimensions both of its conception of chivalry, and of problems with that conception.' Discuss, with reference to TWO or MORE texts you have studied on this course.
8. 'Anxiety about gender identity pervades many of the prose romances.' Discuss, with reference to TWO or MORE texts you have studied on this course.
9. 'Writing in prose is supposed to make a text appear "more true". But the prose romances problematize the notion of truth, so how are we to understand what is meant by "more true"?' Discuss, with reference to TWO or MORE texts you have studied on this course.
10. 'For every prose romance we read, we already know the outcome of the narrative; its unfolding therefore becomes a source of comfort and reassurance for the audience.' In the light of this remark, analyse and discuss the means by which foreknowledge is produced and the functions it serves, in TWO or MORE texts you have studied on this course.
11. 'The structural complexity of prose romances is an important bearer of thematic meaning.' Discuss, with reference to TWO or MORE texts you have studied on this course.
12. What is the role played by lacunae and gaps (intentional or not) in the prose romances you have studied? Your answer should refer to TWO or MORE works.

END OF PAPER