

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON**

*University of London*

**EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS**

*For The Following Qualification:-*

*B.A.*

**French F3400: French Texts IV**

**COURSE CODE : FREN3400**

**UNIT VALUE : 0.50**

**DATE : 09-MAY-03**

**TIME : 14.30**

**TIME ALLOWED : 3 Hours**

## BALZAC'S COMÉDIE HUMAINE AND FRENCH SOCIETY

Answer TWO questions, ONE from EACH section. Use a separate answer book for each question.

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 ANSWERS IN THIS PAPER, OR AN ANSWER IN THIS PAPER AND ONE IN ANOTHER OPTION PAPER, ON THE SAME TEXT OR ON SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME MATERIAL.

### SECTION A

PLEASE USE A SEPARATE ANSWER BOOK FOR EACH QUESTION.

1. Analyse and discuss the function of the myth of Napoleon in *Le Médecin de campagne*.
2. 'Far from being a matrifocal romance, *Eugénie Grandet* is one of Balzac's major patriarchal manifestos.' Discuss.
3. '*Histoire de la grandeur et de la décadence de César Birotteau* est une œuvre privilégiée en cela qu'elle autorise une multiplicité de lectures.' Discuss.
4. 'Puisse une société basée uniquement sur le pouvoir de l'argent frémir en apercevant l'impuissance de la justice sur les combinaisons d'un système qui déifie le succès en en grâciant tous les moyens!' Discuss *La Rabouilleuse* in the light of this exclamation taken from the preface to the novel.
5. Analyse and discuss the representation of gender in *Illusions perdues*.
6. '*Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes* presents the reader with a "total" criticism of society.' Discuss.
7. Analyse and discuss the representation of marriage in *La Cousine Bette*.
8. Analyse and discuss the representation of human and divine justice in *L'Envers de l'histoire contemporaine*.

CONTINUED

## SECTION B

PLEASE USE A SEPARATE ANSWER BOOK FOR EACH QUESTION.

9. 'Balzac does indeed work in and through the conventions of the melodramatic mode, but his achievement lies in the radical reworking of these conventions to support a serious and important artistic aim.' Discuss with reference to TWO or MORE novels you have studied on this course.
10. Analyse and discuss the function of suffering in TWO or MORE novels you have studied on this course.
11. 'L'homme n'est ni bon ni méchant, il naît avec des instincts et des aptitudes; la société, loin de le dépraver [...], le perfectionne, le rend meilleur; mais l'intérêt développe aussi ses penchants mauvais.' Discuss this statement from the 'Avant-propos à la *Comédie humaine*' with reference to TWO or MORE novels you have studied on this course.
12. Analyse and discuss the function of charity in TWO or MORE novels you have studied on this course.
13. 'Balzac's fiction deals with the unravelling of mysteries, the laying bare, the bringing to the "surface", of a final and defining truth.' Discuss with reference to TWO or MORE novels you have studied on this course.

**END OF PAPER**