

# UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

*University of London*

## EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

*For the following qualifications :-*

*B.A.*

### **French F3500: French Texts V**

COURSE CODE : **FREN3500**

UNIT VALUE : **0.50**

DATE : **10-MAY-02**

TIME : **14.30**

TIME ALLOWED : **3 hours**

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**TURN OVER**

## 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. In the 'Avant-propos à la *Comédie humaine*', Balzac claims to write 'à la lueur de deux vérités éternelles: la Religion, la Monarchie, deux nécessités [...] vers lesquelles tout écrivain de bon sens doit essayer de ramener notre pays'. What evidence in support of this claim do you see in *Le Médecin de campagne*?
2. To what extent, in your view, is it possible to read *Eugénie Grandet* as a political novel?
3. 'Ce qui compte, en fait, plus que la conscience d'être probe, c'est la considération.' To what extent would you agree with this statement about *Histoire de la grandeur et de la décadence de César Birotteau*?
4. 'Dans *La Rabouilleuse*, la province devient le lieu et la matière du roman, à l'écart de l'histoire.' To what extent would you agree with this statement?
5. '*La Cousine Bette* examines political and philosophical problems within a framework of melodrama.' To what extent would you agree with this statement?
6. '*Illusions perdues* est avant tout un roman d'apprentissage.' Discuss.
7. Analyse and discuss the ways in which sexuality is presented in *Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes*.
8. 'Dans *L'Envers de l'histoire contemporaine*, on voit que la Religion est non seulement une valeur individuelle, mais encore une valeur sociale.' To what extent would you agree with this proposition?

CONTINUED

## SECTION B

*PLEASE USE A SEPARATE ANSWER BOOK FOR EACH QUESTION.*

9. Analyse and discuss the metaphor of the mask in AT LEAST TWO novels you have studied on this course.
10. 'J'ai mieux fait que l'historien, je suis plus libre.' Explain and discuss this statement made in the 'Avant-propos à la *Comédie humaine*' with reference to AT LEAST TWO novels you have studied on this course.
11. 'La vie n'est-elle pas une machine à laquelle l'argent imprime le mouvement' exclaims Gobseck. Discuss the relevance of this remark to AT LEAST TWO novels you have studied on this course.
12. 'La description, chez Balzac, ne se borne pas à enregistrer les surfaces des êtres et des choses, mais opère un véritable déchiffrement du réel.' Discuss with reference to AT LEAST TWO novels you have studied on this course.
13. In the 'Avant-propos à la *Comédie humaine*', Balzac claims that 'si [...] la passion, qui comprend la pensée et le sentiment, est l'élément social, elle en est aussi l'élément destructeur'. Discuss the ways in which Balzac illustrates this theme in AT LEAST TWO novels you have studied on this course.

**END OF PAPER**