

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

University of London

EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

For The Following Qualification:–

B.A.

French F3500: French Texts V

COURSE CODE : FREN3500

UNIT VALUE : 0.50

DATE : 17-MAY-04

TIME : 10.00

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 answering in French rather than 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. 'Although *Le Médecin de campagne* is often considered as a political manifesto, its political message is incoherent and frequently self-contradictory.' Discuss.
2. Explore the theme of clausturation in *Eugénie Grandet*.
3. To what extent would you agree with the proposition that in *Histoire de la grandeur et de la décadence de César Birotteau*, 'le roman parle autrement que le narrateur'?
4. Balzac claims that *La Rabouilleuse* contains 'de grands enseignements et pour la Famille et pour la Maternité'. To what extent, in your opinion, does the text support this claim?
5. '*Illusions perdues* is a revelation of the secret workings of the world, rather than a *Bildungsroman* illuminating the development of character.' Discuss.
6. 'Vautrin's [Collin's] apparent change of heart at the end of *Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes* summarises the profound pessimism put forward in the text concerning the state of French society at that time.' Discuss.
7. '*La Cousine Bette* est l'une des œuvres les plus pessimistes de Balzac: l'on n'y voit que des histoires de luttes sans merci pour satisfaire des appétits ignobles.' Discuss.
8. Discuss the possible implications and significance of the title *L'Envers de l'histoire contemporaine* in the light of your reading of the novel.

TURN OVER

SECTION B

PLEASE USE A SEPARATE ANSWER BOOK FOR EACH QUESTION.

9. 'Balzac est le romancier du déterminant.' Discuss with reference to TWO or MORE novels you have studied on this course.
10. Analyse and discuss Balzac's treatment of the theme of ambition in TWO or MORE novels you have studied on this course.
11. 'Le retour des personnages apporte une solution remarquable au problème des rapports du roman avec la réalité.' Discuss with reference to TWO or MORE novels you have studied on this course.
12. 'L'homme n'est ni bon ni méchant, il naît avec des instincts et des aptitudes; la Société [...] le perfectionne, le rend meilleur.' To what extent do you consider this statement, made by Balzac in his 'Avant-propos à la *Comédie humaine*', to be borne out by your reading of TWO or MORE novels you have studied on this course?
13. Analyse and discuss the representation of gender in TWO or MORE novels you have studied on this course.
14. Define the relationship of passion to Balzac's theory of 'la pensée', and explore the relevance of passion to his presentation of political themes in TWO or MORE novels you have studied on this course.

END OF PAPER