

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 : 04-MAY-06

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 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. 'The political message of *Le Médecin de campagne* is confused; the only consistent argument is that capital should be considered as a means rather than an end.' Discuss.
2. 'The claim in the "Avant-propos à la Comédie humaine" to view "la Famille et non l'Individu comme le véritable élément social" is hardly lent credence by the dysfunctional family unit portrayed in *Eugénie Grandet*.' Discuss.
3. 'The main interest in *Histoire de la grandeur et de la décadence de César Birotteau* is derived from the tension between narrative perspective and textual detail.' Discuss.
4. To what extent, in your opinion, is it possible to speak of a tension between Paris and the provinces in *La Rabouilleuse*?
5. 'In *Illusions perdues*, for whom you write is a question inseparable from what you write and how you write.' Discuss.
6. 'While the plot of *La Cousine Bette* turns obsessively on marriages planned and actual, the effect is a foregrounding of the structures of compulsory heterosexuality and a critical distancing from them.' Discuss.
7. 'For all that Jacques Collin lives in disguise and as an outlaw until the end of *Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes*, he symbolises the very society from which he is excluded.' Discuss.
8. To what extent, in your opinion, is it possible to consider *L'Envers de l'histoire contemporaine* a political novel?

TURN OVER

SECTION B

PLEASE USE A SEPARATE ANSWER BOOK FOR EACH QUESTION.

9. 'La prostitution devient un modèle pour l'ensemble des relations humaines décrites par Balzac et structure tous ses romans.' Discuss with reference to TWO or MORE novels you have read on this course.
10. 'The detailed descriptions of clothes in *La Comédie humaine* are of interest more for the ways in which they blur the social map than for the social taxonomy they provide.' Discuss with reference to TWO or MORE novels you have read on this course.
11. 'Balzac's conservatism is a response to the problem of "individualism" at a precise historical moment.' Discuss with reference to TWO or MORE novels you have read on this course.
12. 'Il n'y a pas de grand artiste sans grande volonté.' In the light of this remark, discuss Balzac's depiction of genius in TWO or MORE novels you have studied on this course.
13. To what extent, in your opinion, is it possible to describe Balzac as a 'moralist'? Discuss with reference to TWO or MORE novels you have read on this course.
14. 'Dans l'œuvre de Balzac, les effets de la passion ne se manifestent pas seulement au niveau de l'individu, mais aussi au niveau du corps social tout entier.' Discuss with reference to TWO or MORE novels you have read on this course.

END OF PAPER