

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

University of London

EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

For the following qualifications :-

B. A.

French F2402: The Classical Age: 17th Century Literature

COURSE CODE : **FREN2402**

UNIT VALUE : **0.50**

DATE : **08-MAY-02**

TIME : **14.30**

TIME ALLOWED : **2 hours**

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TURN OVER

THE CLASSICAL AGE: DRAMA, NOVEL, MORALISTS

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.

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

SECTION A

PLEASE USE A SEPARATE ANSWER BOOK FOR EACH SECTION.

1. 'Humour in both La Fontaine's *Fables* and La Bruyère's *Caractères* serves as entertainment and also as a means of establishing moral perspective.' Discuss.
2. Compare and contrast presentations of bodies and souls (animal and human) in La Fontaine's *Fables* and La Bruyère's *Caractères*.
3. 'Tant de miroirs, ce sont les sottises d'autrui' (La Fontaine). Compare and contrast portraits of the human condition in the *Fables* and in *Les Caractères* in the light of this line from 'L'Homme et son image'.
4. 'La raison tient de la vérité, elle est une; l'on n'y arrive que par un chemin. et l'on s'en écarte par mille. L'étude de la sagesse a moins d'étendue que celle que l'on ferait des sots et des impertinents.' Discuss the importance of variety and change in the *Fables* and in *Les Caractères* in the light of this remark by La Bruyère.

SECTION B

PLEASE USE A SEPARATE ANSWER BOOK FOR EACH SECTION.

5. 'In *Cinna*, Auguste emerges victorious because he is able to seize the initiative more effectively than any of the other characters in the play.' Discuss.
6. 'Our admiration for Cléopâtre in *Rodogune* is aroused more by her persona as evil mother than by her persona as evil ruler.' How far do you agree?
7. Racine, in the first preface to *Britannicus*, describes the earliest audience reactions to the play as follows: 'Il y en a qui ont pris même le parti de Néron contre moi. Ils ont dit que je le faisais trop cruel. [...] D'autres ont dit au contraire que je l'avais fait trop bon'. Which of these viewpoints do you find more acceptable – or do you reject both? Give your reasons.
8. 'Simplicity of plot and action makes for the most impressive and most moving tragedy.' Discuss this assertion with reference to TWO or MORE of the following: *Cinna*; *Rodogune*; *Britannicus*.

CONTINUED

9. 'Dieu sensible au cœur, non à la raison.' In the light of this fragment, discuss Pascal's defence of the Christian religion in the *Pensées*.
10. In Molière's *Dom Juan*, Dom Louis says with reference to the behaviour of his son that 'un gentilhomme qui vit mal est un monstre dans la nature'. How far, in your opinion, does Molière succeed in turning the 'monstrous' Dom Juan into a subject for comedy?
11. Compare and contrast the roles of God and the supernatural in Pascal's *Pensées* and Molière's *Dom Juan*.
12. 'For La Rochefoucauld in the *Maximes*, the human heart is a place of infinite and constant changeability.' Discuss.
13. 'Everything in *La Princesse de Clèves* is designed to make an implausible ending plausible to the reader.' Discuss.
14. 'Both Mme de La Fayette in *La Princesse de Clèves* and La Rochefoucauld in the *Maximes* are concerned with the basic ethical problem of sincerity – or the lack of it – within human nature.' Discuss.

END OF PAPER