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BRAINWARE UNIVERSITY

Term End Examination 2024-2025
Programme – B.A.(Eng)-Hons-2023
Course Name – Literary Theory
Course Code - BEN40201
(Semester IV)

Full Marks : 60

Time : 2:30 Hours

[The figure in the margin indicates full marks. Candidates are required to give their answers in their own words as far as practicable.]

Group-A

(Multiple Choice Type Question)

1 x 15=15

1. Choose the correct alternative from the following :

- (i) In discussing the biological data related to motherhood and the differentiation of men and women, name which of the following is not discussed by Simone de Beauvoir?
- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| a) Childbirth is the process by which the innate superiority of women and their indisputable role in the perpetuation of the species is established | b) Repeated childbearing might make a woman prematurely old and mishappen and lessen her prospects as an attractive mate |
| c) Nursing is a tiring service and the mother has to feed the child from her own reserves of vitality even when her body protests against it | d) Childbirth foregrounds the conflict between individual and society and endows the female body with a "disturbing fragility" |
- (ii) Which of the following options explains the reason why Simone de Beauvoir categorically rejects the notion of psycho-physiological parallelism as a method to explain the differing conditions of men and women in society?
- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| a) It is a socially and scientifically bankrupt system that tries to explain systemic misdemeanours perpetuated by a patriarchal society as an essentialist function of biology and therefore an unalterable reality | b) It dismantles a natural or evolutionary scale of values where each biological attribute belonging to man and woman can be rated and classified according to its usefulness in propagating the species, as men have a majority of such useful values they enjoy higher power in society and this needs to be stopped |
| c) It tries to posit that men and women are have been biologically gifted with all the attributes required to shape their own reality and their own futures undeterred by the determinism of evolutionary biology | d) It showcases how differences between human males and females can be transposed and observed elsewhere in the natural world among other species, differences thus is a biological reality and not an historical idea |

- (iii) Apply your knowledge to select which of the following is a reason for Beauvoir to claim that biological differences are immaterial when it comes to discussing the degraded position of women within society?
- a) Biological differences in and of themselves despite being facts cannot suppress women unless they are given a certain meaning where the lack of a particular biological attribute(strength for example) is seen in a derogatory manner. This social construction by giving meaning is what is responsible for the poor condition of women within society.
- b) When examined it is clear that women and men are biologically identical in terms of their strengths and vulnerabilities
- c) It is a fact that men have worked hard to develop physiological strength and hence it is unfair and discriminatory to condemn them for using this strength to exert control over women who are their biological inferiors
- d) Since biological differences between men and women are established facts it is of no use to investigate them further to try and explain why women suffer under patriarchal control
- (iv) identify which of the following statements best defines the difference between a philosophy and a theory.
- a) Philosophy is an offshoot of theory
- b) Theory is more metaphysical than philosophy
- c) The applicability of philosophy is more than theory
- d) None of the above
- (v) Which of the following is not a chapter in 'The Communist Manifesto'? Identify.
- a) Proletarians and Communists
- b) Socialist and Communist Literature
- c) Bourgeois and Proletarians Histories
- d) All of the above
- (vi) Which of the options best describes the relationship between the following statements: Statement I: The idea of Communism rose out of the inherent desire of the bourgeois to restructure their power structures that were threatened proletarian cultural hegemony. Statement II: Communism may be seen as the politicisation of the more ideological Marxist discourse about class struggle.
- a) Statement I is true
- b) Statement II is true
- c) Both statements are true
- d) None of the statements are true
- (vii) Identify the correct statement: Statement I: Foucault looks at knowledge as a source of power and then into the property of power of propagating new knowledge. Statement II: Foucault looks at systems of knowledge in a historiographic way.
- a) Statement I is True
- b) Statement II is True
- c) Both statements are true
- d) No statement is true
- (viii) Identify which of the following statement is true in observation of the phenomenon of cultural hegemony.
- a) It is a system of knowledge propagated to create endless counter narratives
- b) It is a democratic system of knowledge creation
- c) It is an autocratic system of knowledge creation
- d) All of the above
- (ix) Which of the following statements best explains the assertion by Said in the Introduction to his 'Orientalism': "My contention is that without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage-and even produce-the Orient politically , sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period."
- a) Said points out that the understanding of the creation and propagation of Oriental
- b) Said points out that the understanding of the Occidental domination of the Orient through depends of the historical

- discourses is essential to understand the hegemonic control of the west of the east
- c) Said points out that the understanding of the Orient cannot be perceived without judging the political, sociological, military and intellectual reckoning of the west
- (x) Interpret the basic unit of language according to Saussure:
- a) Sign
c) Signified
- b) Signifier
d) Phoneme
- (xi) Statement I: Structuralists such as Saussure used language in order to highlight the existence of a structure in different phenomena. Statement II: According to him, a language is made up of organized and logical elements. Identify the true statement.
- a) Only I
c) Both I and II
- b) Only II
d) None of the above
- (xii) Statement I: Structuralism is derived from philosophy while Poststructuralism is derived from linguistics. Statement II: Post-Structuralism is believed as historical whereas Structuralism is believed to be descriptive. Identify the false statement.
- a) Only II
c) Both I and II
- b) Only I
d) None of the above
- (xiii) Statement I: Barthes' notion of the death of the author can be traced back to Eliot's idea of the impersonality of the poet. Statement II: New Criticism also argued that the text had meaning in isolation, separate from the author who produced it. Identify the true statement.
- a) Only I
c) Both I and II
- b) Only II
d) None of the above
- (xiv) Name the founding father of Marxism.
- a) Friedrich Hayek
c) Adam Smith
- b) Karl Marx
d) John Locke
- (xv) According to Gandhi in "Hind Swaraj," what should be the focus of Swaraj (self-rule)? Choose the correct option.
- a) Political independence only
c) Moral and spiritual well-being
- b) Economic prosperity
d) Military strength

Group-B

(Short Answer Type Questions)

3 x 5=15

2. Discuss the chapter "Socialist and Communist Literature" from Marx's 'The Communist Manifesto'. (3)
3. Define structuralism and poststructuralism. (3)
4. How is the concept of Power associated with the concept of Language in literature? (3)
5. Explain the concept of "Swaraj" as presented in Gandhi's work. (3)
6. Explain the relevance of Balzac's story in Barthes' 'The Death of the Author'. (3)

OR

Criticise with reference to Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*- "the relation of the two sexes is not that of two electric poles" (3)

Group-C

(Long Answer Type Questions)

5 x 6=30

7. Describe how does Saussure illustrate the ideas of sign, signifier and signified. (5)
8. What are the key arguments of Barthes in his 'The Death of the Author'? Explain. (5)
9. Explain the concept of "discursive formations" in Foucault's work and their role in shaping knowledge and power structures within an order of discourse. (5)
10. Write critically the way Gandhi formulates the idea of Indian Nationhood through Hind Swaraj. (5)
11. Critically examine how Beauvoir's social constructivist approach towards feminism helps delineate "woman" as "the other" or "The Second Sex" using specific instances from the text. (5)
12. Analyse the historical context and intellectual movements that Said focuses on in the introduction of "Orientalism". (5)

OR

Critically explicate upon Marx and Engel's *The Communist Manifesto*. (5)
