



BRAINWARE UNIVERSITY

Term End Examination 2023
Programme – B.A.(Eng)-Hons-2020
Course Name – Literary Theory
Course Code - BELS503B
(Semester V)

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) Who amongst the following cannot be identified as a well known Orientalist?
- a) Gerard de Nerval
b) Charles Dickens
c) Sir William Jones
d) Francois-Ren de Chateaubriand
- (ii) 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
- (iii) 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 discourses is essential to understand the hegemonic control of the west of the east
b) Said points out that the understanding of the Occidental domination of the Orient through depends of the historical understanding of system of nationhood in 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
d) None of the above
- (iv) Which of the following statements best describes the Marxist idea of historical materialism?
- a) It refers to an account of history that represents the marginalisation of the bourgeoisie in the history of the human
b) It refers to the politicisation of history according to the rights of the common man/working class

- civilisation
- c) It refers to Marx's critique of the idea of history as being biased to the upper classes and prejudiced towards the working classes
- d) None of the above
- (v) Where did Derrida deliver his lecture 'Structure, Sign and Play' which was later published as an essay?
- a) Oxford University
- b) Johns Hopkins University
- c) Harvard University
- d) University of Massachusetts
- (vi) Structuralism is an aesthetic theory based on which of the following assumptions:
- a) That all works of art or texts possess a fundamental deep structure;
- b) That texts are organised like a language with their own grammar
- c) That the grammar of a language is a series of signs and conventions
- d) All of the above
- (vii) Recall what Judith Butler characterises as an "intelligible gender".
- a) Genders which destabilise the normative concepts of gender, sex, and sexuality
- b) Gender that can be constructed in society through the help of intellectual discussions about the matrix of desire
- c) Genders where the discontinuity and incoherence of personhood are encouraged, maintained and legitimised by law
- d) Genders which in some sense institute and maintain relations of coherence and continuity among sex, gender, social practice and desire
- (viii) 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 amongst other species, differences thus is a biological reality and not an historical idea
- (ix) Infer which of the following texts of Strauss were referred to by Derrida in his essay.
- a) The Raw and the Cooked
- b) The Elementary Structures of Kinship
- c) The Savage Minds
- d) All of the above
- (x) Choose which of the following is not the major difference between Harold Bloom's idea of the anxiety of influence and Gilbert and Gubar's idea of anxiety of authorship as elaborated by Elaine Showalter?
- a) Bloom's idea is based on oedipal jealousy and competition for peers whereas for Gubar and Gilbert, the foremothers are a supportive reassurance that makes writing a possibility open to the women
- b) Authorship according to Bloom creates an anxiety of originality where the writer labours to ensure that his original essence is not lost under the burden of inspiration from his predecessors, while for Gilbert and Gubar the anxiety revolves around the mere (im)possibility of a woman wielding a pen

- c) Authorship for Bloom is rooted in fear and anxiety while for Gilbert and Gubar authorship is a comfortable venture for all women
- d) Authorship for Bloom is ultimately a lone project of a man striving towards self-definition while for Gilbert and Gubar authorship appears to be a collaborative project rooted in community
- (xi) Statement I: As soon as language is written down, a distance between the subject and his words is created, causing meaning to become unanchored. Statement II: Derrida however critiques this ◆phonocentrism◆ and argues that the distance between the subject and his words exist in any case, even while speaking ◆ that the meaning of sign is always unanchored. Infer the true statement.
- a) Only I
b) Only II
c) Both I and II
d) None of the above
- (xii) From whom does Derrida derive the idea of bricolage?
- a) Freud
b) Nietzsche
c) Heidegger
d) Levi-Strauss
- (xiii) Analyse and select which of the following is prescribed by Helene Cixous as a remedy for the incessant need for masculine approval that haunts a female author?
- a) Cixous demands the complete dismantling of gender and sex binaries and claims all writing must be gender neutral in order for it to be liberatoy
- b) Cixous claims that women are trapped in a toxic pit of self-victimisation where in order to rise up to the popular idea of patriarchal oppression they enact the role of a victim and suppress their own voice, terrorising themselves
- c) Cixous advocates for a kind of bodily writing that is specific to a woman ◆s lived experience, a new kind of language that has its own linguistic system and is in opposition to the signs that define masculine language
- d) Cixous claims that one must study women as an ontological category rather than framing their understanding on patriarchal models, unless this is done no writing by women shall be considered authentic
- (xiv) Identify the correct statement/s with reference to Saussure: Statement I: The sign is divided into two elements: the signifier and signified. Statement II: The signifier is the concept that results in your mind -- the idea of a dog, or a chair, or liberty or whatever. Statement III: The signified is the material aspect of the sign -- the word on paper, the spoken word, or a traffic sign or a supermarket.
- a) II and III
b) Only I
c) I, II and III
d) None of the above
- (xv) Evaluate why does Cixous claim that women must reign upon the empire of female erotogeneity and female desire as fertile soil for their writing?
- a) It will allign with the stereotypical masculine understanding of the woman as an entirely bodily creature ruled by the passions of the flesh and incapable of rationality or higher thoughts
- b) It will allow other women to identify their hidden untold desires and stories within the voice of the writers and find their turbulent passions being represented authentically for the first time without the shroud of shame or secrecy
- c) It will help contradict the idea that a woman's body is worthy of being celebrated and experienced in its full capacity by rejecting the body in favour of writing which is a masculine enterprise
- d) Phallogocentric attitudes towards the women help them gain confidence about their being and remove self-hatred and revulsion that a woman has towards her own body

Group-B

(Short Answer Type Questions)

3 x 5=15

2. Explain - "Woman must put herself into the text- as into the world and into history- by (3)

her own movement"

3. Discuss the chapter Proletarians and Communism from Marx' *The Communist Manifesto*. (3)
4. Discuss the term Historical Materialism and refer to its significance in understanding Marxist philosophy/ideology. (3)

OR

Analyze Derrida's notion of 'bricolage'. (3)

5. Discuss cultural hegemony. (3)

OR

Discuss what according to Elaine Showalter frames the feminist concerns surrounding women and the problem of authorship? (3)

6. "The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture." Justify. (3)

OR

Justify the need of a specific feminine language in order to convey the lived experiences of women, through your reading of Helene Cixous and Elaine Showalter (3)

Group-C

(Long Answer Type Questions)

5 x 6=30

7. Critique how Butler incriminates the involvement of language in creation of natural gender norms (5)
8. With reference to the Introduction to Said's *Orientalism* explain Marx' assertion "They cannot represent themselves; they must be represented." (5)
9. Discuss the origin and development of structuralism. (5)
10. Differentiate the Feminist, Feminine, and Female stages of writing according to Elaine Showalter (5)

OR

11. What do you understand by the term historical materialism. Discuss its importance in understanding the history of class struggle. (5)
11. Discuss the Foucauldian idea of hauntology with reference to the statement "A spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of communism." (5)

OR

Survey in detail the way Showalter differentiates the epistemological categories of 'woman as a reader' and 'woman as a writer' (5)

12. How does Barthes explain the relationship between the text and the author in his essay? (5)

OR

With reference to Edward Said's *Orientalism* explicate upon the following statement as an understanding of postcolonialism: (5)

'On a visit to Beirut during the terrible civil war of 1975-1976 a French journalist wrote regretfully of the gutted downtown area that "it had once seemed to belong to . . . the Orient of Chateaubriand and Nerval."
