



Register Number:

Date:

ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE- 27
I BA-EJP SEMESTER EXAMINATION: OCTOBER 2019
OPTIONAL ENGLISH – OE 113

TIME: 2 ½ Hours

Max marks: 70

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. You may use a dictionary**
- 2. This paper contains THREE sections and TWO printed pages.**

Section A

Read the following passage from the *Foreword to Raja Rao's Kanthapura*

My publishers have asked me to say a word of explanation.

There is no village in India, however mean, that has not a rich sthala-purana, or legendary history, of its own. Some god or godlike hero has passed by the village – Rama might have rested under this papal-tree, Sita might have dried her clothes, after her bath, on this yellow-stone, or the Mahatma himself, on one of his many pilgrimages through the country, might have slept in this hut, the low one, by the village gate. In this way the past mingles with the present, and the gods mingle with men to make the repertory of your grandmother always bright. One such story from the contemporary annals of my village I have tried to tell.

The telling has not been easy. One has to convey in a language that is not one's own; the spirit that is one's own. One has to convey the various shades and omissions of a certain thought-movement that looks maltreated in an alien language. I use the word 'alien', yet English is not really an alien language to us. It is the language of our intellectual make-up, like Sanskrit or Persian was before, but not of our emotional make-up. We are all instinctively bilingual, many of us writing in our own language and in English. We cannot write like the English. We should not. We cannot write only as Indians. We have grown to look at the large world as part of us. Our method of expression therefore has to be a dialect which will someday prove to be as distinctive and colorful as the Irish or the American. Time alone will justify it.

After language the next problem is that of style. The tempo of Indian life must be infused into our English expression, even as the tempo of American or Irish life has gone into the making of theirs. We, in India, think quickly, we talk quickly, and when we move, we move quickly. There must be something in the sun of India that makes us rush and tumble and run on. And our paths are paths interminable. The Mahabharatha has 214778 verses and the Ramayana 48000. Puranas there are endless and innumerable. We have neither punctuation nor the treacherous 'ats' and 'ons' to bother us – we tell one interminable tale. Episode follows episode, and when our thoughts stop our breath stops, and we move on to another thought.

This was and still is the ordinary style of our story-telling. I have tried to follow it myself in this story.

It may have been told of an evening, when as the dusk falls and through the sudden quiet, lights leap up in house after house, and stretching her bedding on the veranda, a grandmother might have told you, newcomer, the sad tale of her village.

A.I. Answer the following in about 150 words each: (3x10=30)

1. Explain and comment on how Raja Rao conceptualises the inter-mix between Indian story and history? From your reading of Indian Writing, do you think that this complex mix between history and legend is inescapable? Or do you think writers transcend this cultural mix to produce their own ways of story-making.
2. What according to Raja Rao are the many struggles that underlie story-telling? From your reading of Indian writing, do you find the Indian writer struggling yet with such cultural conflicts? Or have they gone beyond this cultural struggle to find their own differing voice? Argue your point of view using appropriate evidence from your reading.
3. Some thinkers say that Raja Rao's view of story-telling and his understanding of language and its cultural implications share in the cultural struggles and challenges of African writers. From your reading of African writers do you think it is true? Argue your point of view using your reading of African writing

Section B

Answer TWO of the following in about 200 words each (2x15=30)

4. Consider Vargas Llosa's novel carefully and comment on the nature of story-telling he employs in *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter*? Explain how this form of story-telling captures the ethos and experience of South American society
5. Most critics think that Milan Kundera's fiction is about art and aesthetics as about love and romance. Many others assume that his fiction is political commentary and social satire. From your reading of Kundera, which of the above two views do you think best describes Kundera's novels? Support your choice using suitable evidence from your reading.
6. Explain what is understood by the *Ars Poetica* theme in Latin American poetry. Do you think this thematic orientation is shared by Adiche in her writing? Support your response with suitable arguments

Section C

Read the following passage and answer the question set on it

The term "world literature" was first used by the German writer and statesman Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, referring to the dissemination of literature from and to countries across the globe. Goethe famously stated in letters to Johann Eckermann in 1827, "National literature is now a rather unmeaning term; the epoch of world literature is at hand, and everyone must strive to hasten its approach." World Literature, in the modern sense, refers

to literary works that are translated into multiple languages and circulated to an audience outside their country of origin.

World literature is not a new concept, but as new media technologies explode, so do new ways of disseminating books across national boundaries. And as new ways emerge of delivering world literature to readers worldwide, many scholars are examining the implications of translations on literature, the impact that literature has on culture, and the ways that cultures can transform books. World literature can be an amazing tool for analyzing globalization because it provides a wonderful example of the ways that information is shared across languages and cultures.

Valerie Henitiuk, a professor of Literature and Translation at the University of East Anglia, in a compelling 2012 essay, explored the process of translation and the meanings that it holds. She posits that “texts become successfully worlded only through interpretive acts of mediation profoundly bound up in aspects of culture.” In other words, a text can never truly be independent of its translation. As literature moves across boundaries of culture and language, it is, in a way, transformed into a unique cultural artifact.

While some believe that world literature gains value in translation, some scholars, such as Gayatri Chakrovorty Spivak, hold the alternate view that the study of world literature often ignores the power of a work in its own language. Spivak believes that scholars must take care to avoid homogenizing cultures and languages when undertaking the study of translated texts, and that consideration must be given to protecting the diversity of languages and cultures present in literary works.

Venkat Mani, in an essay published in 2014, submits that world literature is best understood in the larger context of global media dissemination. Mani points out that in the globalized world that exists today, the place of origin of a literary work does not necessarily define the cultural or national context of the work. He believes that modern world literature is being created and disseminated in a public sphere, aided by new media technologies and the interconnected nature of the Internet and social media. Mani’s viewpoint mirrors Goethe’s statement that “national literature is now a rather unmeaning term,” but takes on new meaning as, almost 200 years later, the world is more connected than ever before through modern technology.

The study of world literature is a powerful tool for global studies because it encompasses so many themes that are important to understanding globalization. World literature can show us how information is shared between cultures and nations. It provides insight into how cultural artifacts are transformed as they traverse languages and boundaries. It also can help us to understand the ways that new media technologies could be facilitating globalization by creating a public space for the transmission of literature and other information across the globe.

Answer the following in not more than 150 words

(10X1=10)

7. Respond to the passage identifying both the prospects and challenges of the notion of ‘World Literature’. Do you think local/regional literature will be lost because of the overarching nature of the idea of world literature? Give reasons for your answer.