**ST JOSEPH’S UNIVERSITY, BENGALURU -27**

Registration Number:

Date & Session

**B.A./B.Com/B.Sc/BCA/BSW/BVC (Additional English)– III SEMESTER**

**SEMESTER EXAMINATION: OCTOBER 2023**

**(Examination conducted in November /December 2023)**

**AE 322 – ADDITIONAL ENGLISH III**

**(For current batch students only)**

**Time: 2 Hours Max Marks: 60**

**This paper contains 4 printed pages and 3 parts**

**PART-A**

**I. Read the following excerpts and answer the questions that follow in about 5 sentences each. (4X5= 20 marks)**

But now

if anyone asks me

I speak up bluntly:

I am a Paraichi.

1.Identify the poem and the poet. What is the significance of the declaration in the last line?

Let it flow forever, let it never stay still.

Let it hold within its flow

proud horses galloping.

Let its eye, like a tall cross,

pierce into the sky.

2.Identify the poem and the poet. What is referred to as ‘it’ over here? Why do you think the poet repeats the phrase “let it” so many times?

Where was the mango tree,

where the koil bird?

when were they kin?

Mountain gooseberry

and sea salt:

when

were they kin?

and when was I kin

to the Lord

of Caves?

3.Identify the poet? What do the two comparisons tell us about the speaker’s relationship with God?

Only occasionally I hear a strangely new

and startling call.

Someone unknown

delivering unknown gifts.

Fearful always

of duplicitous invitations

I strengthen my fort’s walls even more.

4.Identify the poem and the poet. What does the word “duplicitous invitations” mean in the context of the poem? What does the “fort’s walls” refer to?

**PART-B**

**II. Read this excerpt from the translator’s note by AK Ramanujan’s Speaking for Siva and answer ANY ONE of the questions that follow. (1X10= 10 marks)**

So, giving in to the vacana spirit, I have let the vacanas choose me, letting them speak to my biases; translating whatever struck me over the past two decades. A translation has to be true to the translator no less than to the originals. He cannot jump off his own shadow. Translation is choice,interpretation, an assertion of taste, a betrayal of what answers to one's needs, one's envies. I can only hope that my needs are not entirely eccentric or irrelevant to the needs of others in the two traditions, the one I translate from and the one I translate into.

5. AK Ramanujan says that “A translation has to be true to the translator no less than to the originals”. What do you think it means to be “true to the translator”? Do you agree with his assessment of the translation process? Give your reasons.

6. Out of all the translations you read this semester, which anthology or collection do you feel has present day relevance? Give reasons for your choice.

**PART-C**

**III. Read the following excerpt from an essay by Sherin Koshy called “Indian Women writers” and answer ANY TWO of the following questions in about 200-250 words each. (2X15= 30 marks)**

Although India has a history of ancient civilisations such as the Harappa and Mohenjodaro, and of matrilineal societies in the south, no written records of women's literary prowess exists predating the 6th century BC. The emergence of the first body of poetry by women in India could be attributed to the advent of Buddhism. Perhaps it was the freedom offered by the religion, the way of life it offered to women, and the principle of equality that it propagated which allowed women to pen their thoughts for the first time.

Buddhism offered women the opportunity to break away from the restrictions of home life, a major factor in the rise of Indian women's literature in the early 6th century BC. The earliest known anthology of women's literature in India has been identified as those belonging to the Therigatha nuns, the poets being contemporaries of the Buddha. One of these, Mutta, writes,

So free am I, so gloriously free,

free from three petty things - from mortar,

from pestle and from my twisted lord. [Tharu and Lalita p.68]

Mutta's works, translated from Pali, offer an explanation through their interpretation. Religious escapism was the only way out for many women who were frustrated with a life inside the home. They chose to join the Buddhist sangha (religious communities) in their attempts to break away from the social world of tradition and marriage. Thus emerged poems and songs about what it meant to be free from household chores and sexual slavery.

Although the early forms of writing addressed the issue of personal freedom, the poetry that followed later was a celebration of womanhood and sexuality. The Sangam poets that dominated the era between ca. 100 BC-AD 250 wrote extensively about what it meant to have a female body.

S. S. Kalpana says that the 'commentaries that accompany these poems mention songs women used to sing while transplanting seedlings, drawing water and husking paddy' [Tharu and Lalita p.71]. Women apparently sang to keep vigil on the ripening grain and to ward off spirits. These songs took the form of poetry when written down. According to A. K. Ramanujan, who translated most of the poems of the Sangam age, disparities in gender are evident in the way women have written about their experiences. Some of the poems echo the need for bodily love and passion, the foolishness of war and the 'spears' that men left with to wage wars.

Among the poets who wrote in the 12th century AD came the medieval Kannada poet, rebel and mystic, Akkamahadevi, whose life and writing challenged the patriarchal dominance of the world at large. She is supposed to have wandered naked in search of divinity.

The spread of Buddhism and the rapid acceptance of Islam forced Hinduism to rethink the caste system. As Hinduism underwent a revision of spirituality and basked in the new-found outlook of the Bhakti movement, so did the men and women associated with the religion. This is evident in Akkamahadevi's writing as she uses the image of her body to defy her critics when she says,

Brother, you've come drawn by the beauty of these billowing breasts,

this brimming youth.

I am no woman brother, no whore. [Tharu and Lalita p.79]

As a radical mystic it is no surprise that she uses the image of her genitals to convey her understanding of the Bhakti tradition and the Hindu idea of rebirth.

Another poet of the Bhakti tradition was Sule Sankavva, who according to Vijaya Dabbe wrote poetry that could startle contemporary sensibility with its combination of the sacrosanct and the sacrilegious. Writing as a prostitute, her sentiments about the duplicity of society at large are strongly echoed in her only surviving poem, in which she says,

In my harlot's trade having taken one man's money,

I daren't accept a second man's, sir.

And if I do, they'll stand me naked and kill me, sir. [Tharu and Lalita p.81]

The poetry which followed a century later reflected the economic hardships of most women. It was still in the tradition of the earlier poets who used religion and god, and the discriminatory alignment of the oppressive caste system that worked against them, to define their writing.

Among the women who wrote was Janabai, the Varkari saint poet of the low caste Sudra community of Maharashtra, who in defence of her lower-caste status lowered the position of god to that of a fellow sweeper who aids her when she is tired and doesn't mind shovelling dirt for her. The same trend was observed with other lower-caste women who wrote to criticise the Hindu caste system which the Bhakti tradition had failed to eliminate.

**7.** Examine the poem quoted above in the passage “So free am I, so gloriously free,/free from three petty things - from mortar,/from pestle and from my twisted lord” and in reference to the context given the passage. What do you think the phrase “twisted lord" refers to here? Do you see a similar escape from domesticity and world duties in any of the poems you read this semester? What role does religion play in the process of escape?

**8.** Why do you think women poets wrote “extensively about what it meant to have a female body”? Discuss in reference to some of the women’s writings you came across this semester.

9**.**The passage refers to Sule Sankavva, a Bhakti poet who was a prostitute by profession. Discuss how the Bhakti tradition was able to question some of the social hierarchies of gender, profession or caste through their writings.