

B.A. DEGREE EXAMINATION, NOVEMBER 2022
BRANCH XII – ENGLISH
THIRD SEMESTER

COURSE : MAJOR CORE
PAPER : LITERARY CRITICISM - I

TIME: 3 HOURS
MAX. MARKS: 100

SECTION A

I. Answer any three questions in about 400 words each. (3x15=45)

1. What are the advantages of Arnold's touchstone method?
2. How does Sidney define a poet?
3. Write a short note on the nature and function of Secondary Imagination.
4. For Aristotle, what is the source of the tragic effect?
5. What does T.S. Eliot mean by "tradition"? What relationship should the writer have to the writings of the past?

SECTION B

II. Answer any two questions in about 500 words each. (2x20=40)

6. According to Aristotle, what are the central concerns in the construction of a tragedy?
7. Comment on the criteria of assessment used by Samuel Johnson in his criticism of the works of William Shakespeare.
8. Choose any text prescribed for study and analyse how it fits into the framework outlined by M H Abrams in his introduction to *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition*.
9. What is the basis for Socrates' argument, in *Ion*, that knowledge of the rhapsode is always inferior to the knowledge and expertise possessed by practitioners of other professions? How would you respond to Socrates' argument?

SECTION C

III. Analyse any one of the passages following the instructions given. (1x15=15)

10. Analyse the following passage from Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* based on Aristotle's discussion of tragedy.

OEDIPUS:

And so you shall—I can hold nothing back from you,
now I've reached this pitch of dark foreboding.
Who means more to me than you? Tell me,
whom would I turn toward but you

as I go through all this?
 My father was Polybus, king of Corinth.
 My mother, a Dorian, Merope. And I was held
 the prince of the realm among the people there,
 till something struck me out of nowhere,
 something strange . . . worth remarking perhaps,
 hardly worth the anxiety I gave it.
 Some man at a banquet who had drunk too much
 shouted out—he was far gone, mind you—
 that I am not my father's son. Fighting words!
 I barely restrained myself that day
 but early the next I went to mother and father,
 questioned them closely, and they were enraged
 at the accusation and the fool who let it fly.
 So as for my parents I was satisfied,
 but still this thing kept gnawing at me,
 the slander spread—I had to make my move.
 And so,
 unknown to mother and father I set out for Delphi,
 and the god Apollo spurned me, sent me away
 denied the facts I came for,
 but first he flashed before my eyes a future
 great with pain, terror, disaster—I can hear him cry,
 "You are fated to couple with your mother, you will bring
 a breed of children into the light no man can bear to see—
 you will kill your father, the one who gave you life!"
 I heard all that and ran. I abandoned Corinth,
 from that day on I gauged its landfall only
 by the stars, running, always running
 toward some place where I would never see
 the shame of all those oracles come true.
 And as I fled I reached that very spot
 where the great king, you say, met his death.

Now, Jocasta, I will tell you all.
 Making my way toward this triple crossroad
 I began to see a herald, then a brace of colts
 drawing a wagon, and mounted on the bench . . . a man,
 just as you've described him, coming face-to-face,
 and the one in the lead and the old man himself
 were about to thrust me off the road—brute force—
 and the one shouldering me aside, the driver,
 I strike him in anger!—and the old man, watching me
 coming up along his wheels—he brings down
 his prod, two prongs straight at my head!
 I paid him back with interest!
 Short work, by god—with one blow of the staff
 in this right hand I knock him out of his high seat,

roll him out of the wagon, sprawling headlong—
 I killed them all—every mother's son!
 Oh, but if there is any blood-tie
 between Laius and this stranger . . .
 what man alive more miserable than I?
 More hated by the gods? / am the man
 no alien, no citizen welcomes to his house,
 law forbids it—not a word to me in public,
 driven out of every hearth and home.
 And all these curses I—no one but I
 brought down these piling curses on myself!
 And you, his wife, I've touched your body with these,
 the hands that killed your husband cover you with blood.
 Wasn't I born for torment? Look me in the eyes!
 I am abomination—heart and soul!
 I must be exiled, and even in exile
 never see my parents, never set foot
 on native ground again. Else I am doomed
 to couple with my mother and cut my father down . .
 Polybus who reared me, gave me life.

But why, why?
 Wouldn't a man of judgment say—and wouldn't he be right—
 some savage power has brought this down upon my head? ..
 Oh no, not that, you pure and awesome gods,
 never let me see that day! Let me slip
 from the world of men, vanish without a trace
 before I see myself stained with such corruption,
 stained to the heart.

11. Analyse the following passage based on any critical concept you have studied.

She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways - William Wordsworth

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
 Beside the springs of Dove,
 A Maid whom there were none to praise
 And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone
 Half hidden from the eye!
 —Fair as a star, when only one
 Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
 When Lucy ceased to be;
 But she is in her grave, and, oh,
 The difference to me!
