

M. A. DEGREE EXAMINATION, APRIL 2023
BRANCH VII - ENGLISH
SECOND SEMESTER

COURSE: CORE
TITLE: CONTEMPORARY CRITICAL THEORY-I

TIME: 3 HOURS
MAX.MARKS: 100

SECTION A

I. Answer any two in about 300 words each. (2x10=20)

1. Comment on the significance of paradox in Brooks' theory of irony and its contribution to the overall structure of a literary work.
2. Elucidate Jean-Francois Lyotard's arguments against a historical reading of the "post" in "postmodernism".
3. How does Barthes use the concept of "death" to explain his theory of literary interpretation?
4. Discuss the ways in which Jonathan Culler's concept of "literary competence" helps to illuminate the reader's interpretation of a literary text.

SECTION B

II. Answer any three in about 750 words each. (3x20=60)

5. What are the implications of Barthes' theory for the study of literature and literary criticism?
6. Analyse the main argument of Umberto Eco's essay "Towards a Semiological Guerrilla Warfare".
7. Comment on the idea of the "implied reader" in Iser's theory of reading and examine its relevance in understanding the reading process.
8. What is the significance of the reader in Shklovsky's "Art as Technique" and how does the reader's interpretation contribute to the overall meaning of a literary work?
9. Discuss whether or not deconstruction leads to disaster, with reference to Derrida's "différance".

SECTION C

III. Answer any one of the following questions in about 750 words. (20 marks)

10. Attempt a critical analysis of the poem given below using any of the popular literary theories.

(or)

Attempt a deconstructive reading of the poem given below.

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood

And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.
