

STELLA MARIS COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS) CHENNAI 600 086
(For candidates admitted during the academic year 2004 – 05 & thereafter)

SUBJECT CODE: EL/MC/FN64

B. A. DEGREE EXAMINATION, APRIL 2008
BRANCH XII – ENGLISH
SIXTH SEMESTER

COURSE : MAJOR – CORE
PAPER : FICTION-II
TIME : 3 HOURS

MAX. MARKS: 100

SECTION – A

I. Attempt a critical analysis of any one of the following passages, commenting on plot, characterisation, setting, theme and any other technical devices: (1x20=20)

a) Love and religion! thought Clarissa, going back into the drawing-room, tingling all over. How detestable, how detestable they are! For now that the body of Ms. Kilman was not before her, it overwhelmed her the idea. The cruellest things in the world, she thought, seeing them clumsy, hot, domineering, hypocritical, eavesdropping, jealous, infinitely cruel and unscrupulous dressed in a mackintosh coat, on the landing: love and religion. Had she ever tried to convert any one herself? Did she not wish everybody merely to be themselves? And she watched out of the windows the old lady opposite climbing upstairs. Let her climb upstairs if she wanted to; let her stop; then let her, as Clarissa had often seen her, gain her bedroom, part her curtains, and disappear again into the background. Somehow one respected that – that old woman looking out of the window, quite unconscious that she was being watched. There was something solemn in it but love and religion would destroy that, whatever it was, the privacy of the soul. The odious Kilman would destroy it. Yet it was a sight that made her want to cry.

Love destroyed too. Everything that was fine, everything that was true went. Take Peter Walsh now.

b) He stood both frozen and incredulous for five long seconds; and then she threw him a little glance round. He thought he saw a faint exultation in it, a having always had this trump card ready and worse, of having waited, to produce it, to see the full extent of his own hand. She moved quietly away, and there was more horror in the quietness, the apparent indifference, than in the movement. He followed her with his eyes. And perhaps he did at last begin to grasp her mystery. Some terrible perversions of human sexual destiny had begun; he was no more a foot soldier, a pawn in a far vaster battle; and like all battles, it was not about love, but about possession and territory. He saw deeper: it was not that she hated man, not that she materially despised him more than other men, but that her manoeuvres were simply a part of her armory, mere instruments to a greater end. He saw deeper still that her supposed present happiness was another lie. In her central being she suffered still, in the same old way; and that was the mystery she was truly and finally afraid he might discover.

There was silence. “Then you have not only ruined my life. You have taken pleasure in doing so. I know nothing but unhappiness could come from such a meeting as this.”

II. Answer the following THREE questions in about 500 words each. (3x20=60)

1.a. Discuss how World War I has affected all the characters in Mrs. Dalloway.

Or

b. Comment on Virginia Woolf’s narrative technique in Mrs. Dalloway.

- 2.a. “Freedom of will is the highest human good; and it is impossible to have both that freedom and an intervening divinity”. Discuss John Fowles’s novel The French Lieutenant’s Woman in the light of this statement.
- Or
- b. How does Fowles’s depiction of Ernestina and Sarah reflect and challenge Victorian notions of the proper behaviour of women?
- 3.a. Consider Haroun and the Sea of Stories as an allegory.
- Or
- b. In Haroun and the Sea of Stories Rushdie reiterates the importance of literature and celebrates the triumph of storytelling and imagination over raw power and dogmatism. Discuss.

III. Briefly answer any TWO in about 250 words each. (2x10=20)

1. Write a note on the subtexts that resonate in Haroun and the Sea of Stories.
2. Bring out the importance of the role of Charles Smithson’s Cockney servant Sam in The French Lieutenant’s Woman.
3. In Mrs. Dalloway Septimus is considered to be a mirror image of Clarissa. In what ways are they the same? In what ways are they different?
