

BACHELOR OF ARTS EXAMINATION, 2022

(2nd Year, 2nd Semester)

COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

COURSE—CBCS/COM/SEC/4.5B

(Writing, Editing, Translation)

Full Marks: 30

Time: Two Hours

All questions carry equal marks.

Answer *three* questions either in *English* or in *Bangla* but all *three* in the same language.

1 (a) Read the following passage from “Strayed Crab” by Elizabeth Bishop. The animal in this prose poem is a real creature and here she has given it a voice. Write a passage of similar length using an animal as speaker. This animal is in a state of discomfort, possibly dislodged from its usual habitat. Another animal appears. An action takes place.

This is not my home. How did I get so far from water? It must be over that way somewhere.

I am the color of wine, of tinta. The inside of my powerful right claw is saffron—yellow. See, I see it now; I wave it like a flag. I am dapper and elegant; I move with great precision, cleverly managing all my smaller yellow claws. I believe in the oblique, the indirect approach, and I keep my feelings to myself. But on this strange, smooth surface I am making too much noise. I wasn’t meant for this. If I maneuver a bit and keep a sharp lookout, I shall find my pool again. Watch out for my right claw, all passersby! This place is too hard. The rain has stopped, and it is damp, but still not wet enough to please me. My eyes are good, though small; my shell is tough and tight. In my own pool are many small gray fish. I see right through them. Only their large eyes are opaque, and twitch at me. They are hard to catch but I, I catch them quickly in my arms and eat them up.

What is that big soft monster, like a yellow cloud, stifling and warm? What is it doing? It pats my back. Out, claw. There, I have frightened it away. It’s sitting down, pretending nothing’s happened. I’ll skirt it. It’s still pretending not to see me. Out of my way, O monster. I own a pool, all the little fish that swim in it, and all the skittering waterbugs that smell like rotten apples. Cheer up, O grievous snail. I tap your shell, encouragingly, not that you will ever know about it.

And I want nothing to do with you, either, sulking toad. Imagine, at least four times my size and yet so vulnerable... I could open your belly with my claw. You glare and bulge, a watchdog near my

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pool; you make a loud and hollow noise. I do not care for such stupidity. I admire compression, lightness, and agility, all rare in this loose world.

Or,

1 (b) Critically comment on the following:

My Grandmother's House

There is a house now far away where once
I received love... That woman died,
The house withdrew into silence, snakes moved
Among books, I was then too young
To read, and my blood turned cold like the moon
How often I think of going
There, to peer through blind eyes of windows or
Just listen to the frozen air,
Or in wild despair, pick an armful of
Darkness to bring it here to lie
Behind my bedroom door like a brooding
Dog... you cannot believe, darling,
Can you, that I lived in such a house and
Was proud, and loved... I who have lost
My way and beg now at strangers' doors to
Receive love, at least in small change?

2 (a) Write any kind of creative piece in any language keeping in mind the following keywords/phrases: Station platform, trains, going on a journey, a physical journey or a metaphysical one, windows, scenery, long landscapes, memories, recollection, death, mourning, regret, wind blowing, crowd, the bustling sound of people, a stranger.

(Note: You do not necessarily have to use the words/phrases themselves nor do you have to make use of all of them; the words and phrases are only to guide you)

Or,

2.(b). Translate the following passage into Bangla/Hindi.

When the boy came back the old man was asleep in the chair and the sun was down. The boy took the old army blanket off the bed and spread it over the back of the chair and over the old man's shoulders. They were strange shoulders, still powerful although very old, and the neck was still strong too and the creases did not show so much when the old man was asleep and his head fallen forward. His shirt had been patched so many times that it was like the sail and the patches were faded to many different shades by the sun. The old man's head was very old though and with his eyes closed there was no life in his face. The newspaper lay across his knees and the weight of his

arm held it there in the evening breeze. He was barefooted. The boy left him there and when he came back the old man was still asleep. "Wake up old man," the boy said and put his hand on one of the old man's knees. The old man opened his eyes and for a moment he was coming back from a long way away. Then he smiled. "What have you got?" he asked. "Supper," said the boy. "We're going to have supper." "I'm not very hungry." "Come on and eat. You can't fish and not eat." "I have," the old man said getting up and taking the newspaper and folding it. Then he started to fold the blanket. "Keep the blanket around you," the boy said. "You'll not fish without eating while I'm alive." "Then live a long time and take care of yourself," the old man said. "What are we eating?" "Black beans and rice, fried bananas, and some stew." The boy had brought them in a two-decker metal container from the Terrace. The two sets of knives and forks and spoons were in his pocket with a paper napkin wrapped around each set.

3 (a) Read the introductory part of a news report given below. Can you edit it to make it more effective?

NEW DELHI, March 13.—The Prime Minister, Mr P V Narasimha Rao, announced here today that his party would begin selecting candidates for the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections from tomorrow. Mr Rao also said that the Congress (I) manifesto would be released within two weeks. He made this announcement while addressing a general body meeting of the Congress (I) Parliamentary Party this morning. Mr Rao, who is also the Congress (I) president, said the party would field younger candidates for the next Lok Sabha in larger numbers than ever before. Women, too, would be given priority, he added.

Or,

3 (b) Read the introductory part of a news report given below. Can you edit it to make it more effective?

ICSE alleges irregularities in Julian Day management

CALCUTTA, April 17.—Appearing for the Indian Council of Secondary Education (ICSE), Delhi, before Mr Justice Bhagabati Prosad Banerjee of Calcutta High Court today Mr Bhaskar Gupta pointed out that there were many irregularities in the management of Julian Day School, Calcutta, for which the Council had not granted even provisional affiliation to the school.

One such irregularity, Mr Gupta stated, was that Classes IX and X had been opened without the permission of the Council.

It was also pointed out that the teachers of the school were underpaid. The head of the school was a superannuated person.