

MASTER OF ARTS EXAMINATION 2017
Second Year Third Semester
ENGLISH
Literary Theory and Cultural Studies

Time: Two Hours

Full Marks: 30

Answer all questions. All questions carry equal marks.

1a. Critically examine Plato's critique of artistic mimesis on ethical grounds in *The Republic*.

Or

1b. "Plot is the soul of tragedy." What reasons does Aristotle have for making this statement? Discuss.

Or

1c. Why does Sidney think that poetry is superior to both history and philosophy? Discuss in this context Sidney's view of the function of poetry in human life.

Or

1d. Discuss Dryden's changing idea of nature with reference to his view of tragicomedy in *An Essay of Dramatick Poesie* as an example of 'English improvement' in critical theory.

Or

1e. Critically consider how Lessing's account of his disagreement with Winckelmann in *Laocoon or the Limits of Poetry and Painting* brought about a break in the traditional practice of comparing visual arts with poetry.

2a. "While Wordsworth stressed the importance of tradition and its roots in illiterate forms of cultural life, in Coleridge's thought the politics of imagination formed the basis of a view of cultural authority as transcendental." Discuss with reference to the "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads* and the relevant sections of *Biographia Literaria*.

Or

2b. Discuss how Arnold's essay "The Study of Poetry" participates in a conservative politics of canon formation.

Or

2c. How does Eliot envisage a symbiotic relationship between the present and the past of poetry? Discuss with reference to his essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent."

Or

2d. Illustrate the influence of Foucault on Greenblatt's essay "Invisible Bullets."

3a. Explain the roles of historicism, culture, language and literary criticism in the attainment and functioning of cultural hegemony according to Gramsci.

Or

3b. What light do theories of imperialism throw on the nature of the economic relationship between the coloniser and the colonised? Support your answer with evidence.

Or

3c. Discuss the journey of feminist literary theory through its liberal, radical and post-structuralist phases.

Or

3d. Explain how the term "queer" gained new political momentum in the 1990s within American academia and forced a re-visioning of essentialist notions of gender and sexuality.