Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology Delhi

Ph.D. Entrance Examination (Literature) | May 2019
Total Marks: 100

Roll No. _____

This paper has two parts. Part I comprises objective-type questions. It carries 20 marks and you will be given 25 minutes to complete it. Part II carries 80 marks, and you will be given 90 minutes to complete it.
Please note that Part I is a qualifying test for Part II, and Part II will only be evaluated if you obtain the cut off mark in Part I.

PART I (20 marks)

PUT A TICK MARK AGAINST THE RIGHT ANSWER

1. Revolution, says Karl Marx, is the locomotive of history. Here was a locomotive that had traveled at remarkable speed, for in April 1792, not yet three years after the fall of the Bastille, the white Patriots in Port-au-Prince were being besieged by a composite army of royalist commandants, white planters, brown-skinned Mulattoes, and black slaves, none of them constrained but all of them for the time being free and equal partners. No doubt most of the rich were only awaiting the restoration of "order" to put the slaves back in their places again, but the mere fact of the revolutionary association and the temporary equality meant that the old spell was broken and things would never be the same again.

The "old spell" here means:

a) The fear of battle
b) A nostalgia for the past
c) The hold of hierarchy
d) The desire for revolution

2. As Archer listened, his sense of inadequacy and inexpressiveness increased. The boy was not insensitive, he knew; but he had the facility and self-confidence that came of looking at fate not as a master but as an equal. 'That's it: they feel equal to things—they know their way about,' he mused, thinking of his son as the spokesman of the new generation which had swept away all the old landmarks, and with them the signposts and the danger-signal.

Which of the following best conveys the gist of this passage?

a) Archer is proud of his son
b) Archer thinks of his son as someone who can conquer fate
c) Archer feels inadequate in the company of his son
d) Archer is both envious and critical of his son

3. Thus, it becomes clear that the principle that obligated a man to have no partner outside the couple he formed was different in nature from that which tied a woman to an analogous obligation. In the case of the woman, it was insofar as she was under the authority of her husband that this obligation was imposed on her. In the man's case, it was because he exercised authority and because he was expected to exhibit self-mastery in the use of this authority, that he needed to limit his sexual options.

This passage claims that:

a) The principles that imposed monogamy on men and women were essentially the same
b) Self-mastery was expected of men but not of women
c) Sexual options were limited for men but not for women
d) Women were restrained by marriage but men were not

4. On a spring afternoon in 19__, the year in which for months on end so grave a threat seemed to hang over the peace of Europe, Gustave Aschenbach, or Von Aschenbach as he had been officially known since his fiftieth birthday, had set out from his apartment on the Prinzregentenstrasse in Munich to take a walk of some length by himself. The morning's writing had overstimulated him: his work had now reached a difficult and dangerous point which demanded the utmost care and circumspection, the most insistent and precise effort of will, and the productive mechanism in his mind - *motus animi continuus* which according to Cicero is the essence of eloquence - had so pursued its reverberating rhythm that he had been unable to halt it even after lunch, and had missed the refreshing daily siesta which was now so necessary to him as he became increasingly subject to fatigue.

Gustave Aschenbach missed his siesta because ….

a) A threat was hanging over Europe
b) He had an obscure disease with a Latin name
c) He was too exhausted to rest
d) He was consumed by his work

5. The way a city is conceived by a planner or mapped by a cartographer – with its 'topdown' panoramic views, scaled distances, and clearly defined routes for vehicular and pedestrian traffic – is different from the way that the same city is experienced, or learned, by the walker, the runner, who takes his or her own route through the city streets and alleyways, and experiences the city in a sensuous way, distinct from, yet related to, the planner's understanding of it. Individuals develop their own 'ways of operating' in everyday life, which allow them to reinvent a static space into a lived place.

Which of the following may be conclusively implied from the given paragraph?

a) Planners travel in vehicles
b) Cartographers are unable to predict all routes
c) Urban panorama can only be viewed from the top
d) There is no relation between a cartographer's understanding of a city and a pedestrian's

6. Different systems provoke different ways of knowing and being in the world – the repertoire supports "embodied cognition", collective thinking, and knowing in place, whereas archival culture favours rational, linear, and so-called objective and universal thought and individualism. The rise of memory and history, as differentiated categories, seems to stem from the embodied/ documented divide. But these are not static binaries, or sequential pre/post, but active processes – two of several interrelated and coterminous systems that continually participate in the creation, storage, and transmission of knowledge.

Which of the following relationships in the given paragraph are analogous to the relationship between "performance" and "print"?

a) "embodied" and "documented"
b) "universal" and "individual"
c) "pre" and "post"
d) "transmission" and "storage"

7. For a century, talk about testosterone as the "male hormone" has woven folklore into science, so that supposedly objective claims seemingly validate cultural beliefs about the structure of masculinity and the "natural" relationship between women and men. Labeling testosterone the male sex hormone suggests that it is restricted to men and is alien to women's bodies, and obfuscates the fact that women also produce and require testosterone as part of healthy functioning. Even the earliest hormone researchers understood that testosterone has wide-ranging effects on metabolism, liver function, bones, muscle, skin and the brain in both sexes. But because early hormone researchers were fixated on sexual anatomy and reproduction, they gave short shrift to testosterone's myriad effects, treating it as both oddly narrow — that it is about things men have more of — and overwhelmingly powerful.

This passage argues that:

a) The natural relationship between women and men is shaped by their hormones

b) Scientific claims are not free of cultural biases

c) Early researchers were fascinated by the wide-ranging effects of testosterone

d) Women do not produce as much testosterone as men

8. What does a nation do with minorities that it doesn't regard as real citizens? Hitler's answer was genocide but modern nations have experimented with other solutions, expanding the menu of discriminatory options available to the majoritarian State. These are worth examining. The Holocaust was, in scale and intent, so evil that pundits hesitate to compare the industrial murder of Jews to the persecution of minorities elsewhere. This is a useful check on rhetorical excess but it stops us from seeing something true: all majoritarianism isn't fascism, but fascism is always majoritarianism unbound.

Which of the following is not implied by the passage?

a) Post-World War II, modern nations have sought newer, more inclusive ways of granting citizenship

b) Majoritarianism can lead to Fascism

c) The Holocaust is an extreme case of Majoritarianism

d) Equal citizenship is not automatically assured to every member of a nation state

9. Those were drinking days, and most men drank hard. So very great is the improvement Time has brought about in such habits, that a moderate statement of the quantity of wine and punch which one man would swallow in the course of a night, without any detriment to his reputation as a perfect gentleman, would seem, in these days, a ridiculous exaggeration. The learned profession of the law was certainly not behind any other learned profession in its Bacchanalian propensities; neither was Mr. Stryver, already fast shouldering his way to a large and lucrative practice, behind his compeers in this particular, any more than in the drier parts of the legal race.

Which of the following is not implied by the passage?

a) In olden days, gentlemen did not drink much alcohol

b) Members of respectable professions tended to drink freely

c) Mr Stryver was rapidly amassing a large and profitable clientele

d) Lawyers were second to none in their devotion to Bacchus

10. *Much Ado about Nothing* sets up a complex chain of association among the word, the sword, and the phallus, marking off language as the domain of masculine privilege and masculine aggression. The masculine, in the world of the play, is the place of speaking and reading subjects, of manipulators and interpreters of signs. The characters are much concerned with self-concealment and the exposure of others, with avoiding objectification by others, the abjection of which the cuckold's horn becomes the fearful sign. To read others in this play is always an act of aggression; to be read is to be emasculated, to be a woman.

All the following statements are true with regard to this passage except

a) It demonstrates that women are better readers than men

b) It traces a link between language and power in the play

c) It reveals how the control of signs consolidates male privilege in the play

d) It uncovers how the word, the sword, and the phallus are interlinked in a sexist semiotic universe

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PART II (80 MARKS)

Time: 90 minutes

Answer any ONE of the following questions. Please note that your answer should be between 700-800 words long

1. Name a creative writer or theoretician whose work has been important in your study of Literature, and write about the ways in which they have informed your reading and thought.

2. Map the contemporary literary field in South Asia, laying out, in broad terms, the forms taken by literary output and production in recent years, and what they tell us about the current cultural, political and economic climate we inhabit.

3. Discuss Performance Studies as an anti-discipline. What are the possibilities of performance analysis in instances of conflict and repression?

4. According to you, who are the two or three most powerful Dalit writers today, and what do you find especially significant in their work?

5. Compare the significance of "myth" in the work of two modern thinkers.