

2019
North-Eastern Hill University
PhD Entrance Test
ENGLISH

(Figures in the margin indicate the marks against each question)

Full Marks 50

Time 2 Hours

1. Answer *any one* of the following questions:

20

- a. How does the study of literary theory impact reading of literary texts? Illustrate with examples.
- b. "We challenge fears. Literature is unafraid." Write a critical essay on the relevance of studying literature in the light of the given statement.
- c. What is plagiarism? What are the modern methods to combat the menace of plagiarism?
- d. Write a note on the history plays of Shakespeare
- e. Do you agree with the statement that "poetry is the criticism of life"? Give a reasoned answer.
- f. Attempt an ecocritical reading of any literary text of your choice.
- g. "African American women now stand at a different historical moment. Black women appear to have a voice, and with this new-found voice comes a new series of concerns." In the light of the above statement write a note on Black Feminism.
- h. "Myth and tribal folklore are indeed among the core subject matters of the Northeast poets in general. But there is certainly more to it than simply questing 'for spiritual uplift, relief from the contemporary turbulence' and seeking their shelter as a form of Romantic escapism..." In light of this statement, examine the significance of myths in Northeast poetry.
- i. Write a critical note on the emerging trends in Diaspora literature.

2. Write a short note on any *two* of the following:

10X2=20

- a. Blake's concept of Innocence
- b. Verisimilitude
- c. New Historicism
- d. Womanism
- e. Roland Barthes' "Lover's Discourse"
- f. Ideological State Apparatuses
- g. Protest Literature
- h. Queer Studies

Contd.

3. Critically appreciate the following prose piece/ poem. (*Any one*)

1X10= 10

a. The term 'popular' has very complex relations to the term 'class'. We know this, but are often at pains to forget it. We speak of particular forms of working-class culture; but we use the more inclusive term, 'popular culture' to refer to the general field of enquiry. It's perfectly clear that what I've been saying would make little sense without reference to a class perspective and to class struggle. But it is also clear that there is no one-to-one relationship between a class and a particular cultural form or practice. The terms 'class' and 'popular' are deeply related but they are not absolutely interchangeable. The reason for that is obvious. There are no wholly separate 'cultures' paradigmatically attached, in a relation of historical fixity, to specific 'whole' classes—although there are clearly distinct and variable class – cultural formations. Class cultures tend to intersect and overlap in the same field of struggle. The term 'popular' indicates this somewhat displaced relationship of culture to classes. More accurately, it refers to that alliance of classes and forces which constitute the 'popular classes'. The culture of the oppressed, the excluded classes: this is the area to which the term 'popular' refers us. And the opposite side to that – the side with the cultural power to decide what belongs and what does not – is, by definition, not another 'whole' class, but that other alliance of classes, strata and social forces which constitute what is not 'the people' and not the 'popular classes': the culture of the power—bloc.

b. Old and alone, she sits at nights,
Nodding before the television.
The house is quiet now. She knits,
rises to put the kettle on,

watches a cowboy's killing, reads
the local Births and Deaths, and falls
asleep at 'Growing stock-piles of war-heads'.
A world that threatens worse ills

fades. She dreams of life spent
in the one house: suffers again
poverty, sickness, abandonment,
a child's death, a brother's brain

melting to madness. Seventy years
of common trouble; the kettle sings.
At midnight she says her silly prayers,
And takes her teeth out, and collects her night-things.
