

PhD Entrance Test 2018
Department of English
NEHU, Shillong

Time: 2 Hours (11am –1pm)
Marks: 50

Part I

Answer *any one* of the following:

(20 Marks)

- 1) Comment upon the emergence of Marginal Literatures in English from different regions in India.
- 2) "Poetry is useless. That's the prevailing sentiment in our culture, as far as I can tell. CEOs and lawyers rule the world. Policemen protect property and keep the peace and provide material for television dramas. Athletes and rock stars and movie stars make tons of money and provide material for gossip columns. But poets? Who cares?"
Comment.
- 3) Do you think literary and socio-political theory has become an indispensable part of literary studies?
- 4) Write an essay on the depiction of the 'fallen woman' in nineteenth century British literature using textual illustrations.
- 5) How and why has eco-criticism become an important tool for understanding the rapacious dimension of human aspiration portrayed in literature?
- 6) Write a critical note on the modernist aspects of Metaphysical Poetry.
- 7) How is Puritanism germane to American Literature?
- 8) Would you agree with the idea that drama is a collaborative art?

Part II

Write short notes on *any two* of the following:

(10 Marks)

- a) Queer Theory
- b) Spy Fiction
- c) The Heroic Couplet
- d) *Shadow Lines*
- e) Folklore as a motif
- f) Feminist Literature
- g) New Historicism

Part III

Answer *any one* of the following:

(20 Marks)

Write a critical appreciation of:

- 1) 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.

2) Critically analyse the following passage in not more than 400 words:

Sometimes fate is like a small sandstorm that keeps changing directions. You change direction but the sandstorm chases you. You turn again, but the storm adjusts. Over and over you play this out, like some ominous dance with death just before dawn. Why? Because this storm isn't something that blew in from far away, something that has nothing to do with you. This storm is you. Something inside of you. So all you can do is give in to it, step right inside the storm, closing your eyes and plugging up your ears so the sand doesn't get in, and walk through it, step by step. There's no sun there, no moon, no direction, no sense of time. Just fine white sand swirling up into the sky like pulverized bones. That's the kind of sandstorm you need to imagine.

And you really will have to make it through that violent, metaphysical, symbolic storm. No matter how metaphysical or symbolic it might be, make no mistake about it: it will cut through flesh like a thousand razor blades. People will bleed there, and you will bleed too. Hot, red blood. You'll catch that blood in your hands, your own blood and the blood of others.

And once the storm is over you won't remember how you made it through, how you managed to survive. You won't even be sure, in fact, whether the storm is really over. But one thing is certain. When you come out of the storm you won't be the same person who walked in. That's what this storm's all about.