ENGLISH

PAPER—II

(LITERATURE)

Time Allowed : Three Hours

Maximum Marks : 250

QUESTION PAPER SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS

Please read each of the following instructions carefully before attempting questions

There are EIGHT questions divided in two Sections.

Candidate has to attempt FIVE questions in all.

Question Nos. **1** and **5** are compulsory and out of the remaining, THREE are to be attempted choosing at least ONE question from each Section.

The number of marks carried by a question/part is indicated against it.

Answers must be written in ENGLISH.

Word limit in questions, if specified, should be adhered to.

Attempts of questions shall be counted in chronological order. Unless struck off, attempt of a question shall be counted even if attempted partly. Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off.

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SECTION—A

1. Write short notes on the following : 10×5=50

(a) The comically self-aware persona in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"

(b) Yeats's fancy for an aristocratic life of elegance and leisure in "A Prayer for My Daughter"

(c) The thematic rhymes in Section 3 of "In Memory of W. B. Yeats"

(d) Postcolonial melancholia

(e) Postmodern 'realisms'

2. Write essays on the following questions : 25×2=50

(a) How sustainable is the argument that Indian writers in English betray an 'anxiety of Indianness'?

(b) To what extent have Indian traditions of thought influenced A. K. Ramanujan's poetry?

3. *(a)* How does Beckett exploit the metaphor of life *as* theatre in *Waiting for Godot*? 25

(b) Was Philip Larkin, the poet troubled by the socio-economic imbalances in post-World War II Britain? Substantiate. 25

4. *(a)* Discuss some major issues involving language *as* power in postmodern English writing. 25

(b) How crucial in your view is the concept of 'Othering' in postcolonial literatures? 25

SECTION—B

5. Answer the questions that follow this passage : 10×5=50

It is worth attempting some head-on thoughts about 'meaning'. Confronted with passages of text you may sometimes face a choice between leading questions : 'what does it mean' *versus* 'how does it work'. It will be evident that words and phrases carry lexical meanings, sometimes in multiple array of possible signifying activities, sometimes also echoing other literary or historical usage. It will be evident too that what words mean is a different question from what a text-passage means; or what are the meanings at work in a whole literary composition, its thematic conflicts and developments and layers of interpretation. Also a further complication arises when we speak of what a person means, of his or her intention to be understood in a certain way, through speech or action; thus concerning Cordelia's silence in *King Lear* we may ask two slightly but importantly different questions : what does her silence mean, and what does she mean by her silence. In drama, these issues can

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be especially acute : what a particular speech 'means' will vary amongst its onstage auditors, some of whom may be more inward than others with part hidden purposes; and for the larger audience an initial array of distinct possible or probable meanings may be modified in retrospect by later disclosures or the 'dramatic irony' of subsequent events. It is fairly unlikely that questions of the playwright's own meaning or meaning-intention will feature strongly in this interplay of interpretation, though the choice of topic may indicate certain possible motives in the context of the times.

Where personal character is represented as a focus for point-of-view interaction, as in narrative fiction, again what is meant may be an aspect of what this person means, in speech and action, or what this person is capable of successfully wishing to mean, depending on self-knowledge and expressed in the sense of actions consequentially undertaken, such actions then interpreted by others from differing viewpoints along significantly divergent lines. The resulting social complex of behavior, and the novelist's construction of an extended meaning-process in many strands, give the reader much work for imaginative and emotional intelligence, for sympathy tempered by judgment. Linguists and philosophers of language, and even lawyers, sometimes speak of 'plain sense', normative or 'ordinary-language' meaning; but students of literature know well that literary language is not ordinary, even when it adopts for stylistic purposes the speech patterns of natural utterance. Patterns of symbolism or constructed allegory, especially in pre-modern works, or tragic foreclosure in tightly plotted drama, may also require us to read for the sense of the design along more or less genre-specific lines of construal, just as earlier communities once read the pattern of daily events in terms of a directing providence. Both grammar and syntax inflect the stylistic pitch and meaning-effects of writing, and formal devices like prosody and meter and figuration will alert the reader to further aspects of meaning carried by structure and form—bringing into view what may be meant by 'carried' in this context. Richness of meaning may challenge or even defeat coherence of design; or it may reveal ordered depths of multiple significance (polysemy, ambiguity), or layers of structure and structure-echo, so that successive readings and succeeding generations of readers can discover constantly new insights and rewards.

(a) What possible meanings exist *beyond* mere lexical meaning?

(b) How differently significant are the two questions concerning Cordelia's silence in *King Lear*?

(c) What special meaning to a speech does 'dramatic irony' give?

(d) In what way is the meaning of a character's utterance limited and limiting in narrative fiction?

(e) Explain the phrase 'the sense of the design'.

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6. Write essays on the following questions : 25×2=50

(a) What memories of childhood and family inform *A House for Mr Biswas*?

(b) Comment critically on the view that *A Passage to India* presents a muddle—the whole country as a place of division and disjunction.

7. (a) Attempt a critique of the writer as worker as enunciated in Marxist critical thought. 25

(b) How do Feminist writers engage cultural politics? 25

8. (a) How does *Mrs Dalloway* capture the sense of rupture caused by a catastrophic war? 25

(b) Comment on the deployment of repetitive language and action in the English 'new theatre'. 25

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