

Time- 60 Min

Max Marks- 30

Instructions:

1. This paper has TWO SECTIONS and THREE printed pages.
2. You are allowed to use a dictionary.
3. Don't exceed the word limit.

SECTION A

I. Read the following excerpt from *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter*.

"It's my memory that's treacherous. That business about the names, I mean. I'm telling you this in all confidence, my friend. I'm not the one who's mixing them up; they're getting mixed up all by themselves. And when I realize what's going on, it's too late. I have to perform a juggling act to get them back in their proper places, to invent all sorts of clever reasons to account for all the shifting around. A compass that can't tell the north from the south can lead to grave, grave consequences."

I.A) Answer the following in about 100 words each.

(3x5=15)

- 1) Who is the speaker here? Who is the 'friend'? What is being 'mixed up'?
- 2) How many 'grave consequences' did this book have? What are they?
- 3) "One night a friend lent me a book of short stories by Franz Kafka. I went back to the pension where I was staying and began to read *The Metamorphosis*. The first line almost knocked me off the bed. I was so surprised. The first line reads, "As Gregor Samsa awoke that morning from uneasy dreams, he found himself transformed in his bed into a gigantic insect. . . ." When I read the line, I thought to myself that I didn't know anyone was allowed to write things like that. If I had known, I would have started writing a long time ago. So, I immediately started writing short stories." – Gabriel Garcia Marquez

In *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter*, Vargas Llosa seems to be delivering to his readers a moment that Kafka's *Metamorphosis* offered to Garcia Marquez. What is the connection?

SECTION B

I. Read the passage below on World Literature and answer the questions set on it:

In the afternoon of 31 January 1827, a new vision of literature was born. On that day, Johann Peter Eckermann, faithful secretary to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, went over to his master's house, as he had done hundreds of times in the past three and a half years.

Goethe reported that he had been reading *Chinese Courtship* (1824), a Chinese novel. 'Really? That must have been rather strange!' Eckermann exclaimed. 'No, much less so than one thinks,' Goethe replied.

A surprised Eckermann ventured that this Chinese novel must be exceptional. Wrong again. The master's voice was stern: 'Nothing could be further from the truth. The Chinese have thousands of them, and had them when our ancestors were still living in the trees.' Then Goethe reached for the term that stunned his secretary: 'The era of world literature is at hand, and everyone must contribute to accelerating it.' World literature – the idea of world literature – was born out of this conversation in Weimar, a provincial German town of 7,000 people.

Like the rest of Europe, Weimar fell under the cultural shadow of Paris. The city exported its metropolitan culture, making Europeans read French novels, recite French poetry and watch French plays. Many German artists and intellectuals responded to Paris's cultural domination with a nationalist initiative. They collected folk tales and other components of popular and peasant pastime, valorising an entity called German culture. Indeed, they helped to make the essentially German idea of culture – as opposed to the Anglo 'society' or the French 'civilisation' – the foundation for a future nation state.

Goethe himself had been educated in the French manner. He agreed with German nationalists that cultural dependence on France must end. But he disagreed with their search for native German culture and folk traditions. Goethe searched for an alternative to both metropolitan culture and German nationalism. First, he turned to England, especially William Shakespeare, but soon realised that Anglo cultural dominance was no improvement. He needed something not just different, but bigger and better. The solution was world literature.

World literature originated as a solution to the dilemma Goethe faced as a provincial intellectual caught between metropolitan domination and nativist nationalism. In addition to Chinese novels, he had been reading the classical Sanskrit play *Shakuntala* by Kalidasa; he had studied Arabic; and he had fallen for the medieval Persian poet Hafez. All around him, his associates were dismissive of these interests. On his birthday, they gave Goethe a turban. Such pranks left Goethe undaunted. He persevered with his far-flung reading habits, hoping that others would follow his example. For Goethe, world literature represented the bold ideal of a world in which no single language or nation dominated. World literature was the cultural expression of a political order, one in which the world had moved beyond the nationalism and colonialism that were dominating the 19th century.

Goethe knew he would have to convert his contemporaries to the ideal of world literature. He also knew that he had a powerful ally: the reality of an emerging world market, including in literature. The availability of works from distant places, a relatively new phenomenon, was what had made possible the idea of world literature in the first place. This world market, as he saw it, gave a particular role to Germany: 'Whoever knows and studies German, inhabits the marketplace where all nations offer their products; he plays the translator even as he reaps profits.' Through translation, German publishers and writers could profit from cultural difference, bringing literature from distant lands to the beautiful Duchess Anna Amalia Library in Weimar, where Goethe liked to work...

Since a world market led to the idea of world literature, and European colonialism underlay the world market, wasn't world literature therefore an extension of colonialism, a rebuke to Goethe? For Marx and Engels, world literature was bourgeois, ie capitalist and therefore imbricated with colonialism. But to reject world literature would be to throw out the baby with

the bathwater. Neither globalisation, nor a global interconnected literary world were, themselves, the problem. Everything hinged on the how, on the terms of organisation. Globalisation was inexorable, and a world literature would also, inevitably, develop; it was important that world literature be put on a new basis, that it be international and emancipatory and cosmopolitan...

In India, Rabindranath Tagore championed the same idealist model of world literature. Honouring the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the two great Indian epics, Tagore nevertheless exhorted readers to think of literature as a single living organism, an interconnected whole without a centre. Having lived under European colonialism, Tagore saw world literature as a rebuke to colonialism. But he also saw it as a rebuke to those hoping to cherish only South Asian cultural traditions as the alternative.

I.B) Answer the following in about 100 words each.

(3X5=15)

- 1) Respond to the above passage and explain the varied dimensions that constitute world literature. Comment also on the significance of these dimensions to the study of literature as well.
- 2) What are challenges that world literature encounters as a field of reflection and study? What can it end up being if no proper thought and direction are given to its practice? Comment on the many resolutions possible for such challenges.
- 3) Explain how Mahasweta Devi re-tells the Draupadi tale in order make it relevant for the contemporary context. Do you think it squarely comments on the place and position of tribal women in relation to the zamindari and the modern state simultaneously? Give appropriate reasons for your answer.
