

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA
B.A. (HONOURS)/B.A. IN ENGLISH



050

AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING - LEVEL 4
FINAL EXAMINATION - January 2025
CRITICISM AND ANALYSIS - LEU4503/LSU2203
DURATION - THREE HOURS (03 hours)

DATE: 12. 01. 2025

TIME: 01.30 pm. - 04.30pm.

COMPLETE EITHER PART A OR PART B. IF YOU SELECT PART A, YOU MUST ANSWER QUESTIONS 1, 2 AND 3.

IF YOU SELECT PART B, YOU MUST ANSWER QUESTIONS 4, 5 AND 6, SELECTING AT LEAST ONE (b) QUESTION.

Part A

1. Read the following passage and analyze it stylistically. (40 marks)

We went into the house by a side door - the great front entrance had two chains across it outside - and the first thing I noticed was, that the passages were all dark, and that she had left a candle burning there. She took it up, and we went through more passages and up a staircase, and still it was all dark, and only the candle lighted us.

At last we came to the door of a room, and she said, "Go in."

I answered, more in shyness than politeness, "After you, miss."

To this, she returned: "Don't be ridiculous, boy; I am not going in." And scornfully walked away, and - what was worse - took the candle with her.

This was very uncomfortable, and I was half afraid. However, the only thing to be done being to knock at the door. I knocked, and was told from within to enter. I entered,

therefore, and found myself in a pretty large room, well lighted with wax candles. No glimpse of daylight was to be seen in it. It was a dressing-room, as I supposed from the furniture, though much of it was of forms and uses then quite unknown to me. But prominent in it was a draped table with a gilded looking-glass, and that I made out at first sight to be a fine lady's dressing-table.

Whether I should have made out this object so soon, if there had been no fine lady sitting at it, I cannot say. In an arm-chair, with an elbow resting on the table and her head leaning on that hand, sat the strangest lady I have ever seen, or shall ever see.

She was dressed in rich materials - satins, and lace, and silks - all of white. Her shoes were white. And she had a long white veil dependent from her hair, and she had bridal flowers in her hair, but her hair was white. Some bright jewels sparkled on her neck and on her hands, and some other jewels lay sparkling on the table. Dresses, less splendid than the dress she wore, and half-packed trunks, were scattered about. She had not quite finished dressing, for she had but one shoe on - the other was on the table near her hand - her veil was but half arranged, her watch and chain were not put on, and some lace for her bosom lay with those trinkets, and with her handkerchief, and gloves, and some flowers, and a prayer-book, all confusedly heaped about the looking-glass.

It was not in the first few moments that I saw all these things, though I saw more of them in the first moments than might be supposed. But, I saw that everything within my view which ought to be white, had been white long ago, and had lost its lustre, and was faded and yellow. I saw that the bride within the bridal dress had withered like the dress, and like the flowers, and had no brightness left but the brightness of her sunken eyes. I saw that the dress had been put upon the rounded figure of a young woman, and that the figure upon which it now hung loose, had shrunk to skin and bone. Once, I had been taken to see some ghastly waxwork at the Fair, representing I know not what impossible personage lying in state. Once, I had been taken to one of our old marsh churches to see a skeleton in the ashes of a rich dress, that had been dug out of a vault under the church pavement. Now, waxwork and skeleton seemed to have dark eyes that moved and looked at me. I should have cried out, if I could.

2. Read the following advertisements and comment on the effectiveness of the stylistic devices used to convey their message. **(30 marks)**
- (a). New Sauce. New Crust. New Cheese. Still Round! (Advertisement for pizza)
- (b). Skindulgence - Indulge your skin with new LUX Chocolate Seduction Soap. Rich with real cocoa cream and strawberry vitamins; it nourishes your skin and leaves it deliciously gorgeous (Advertisement for soap)
- (c). Respect Water. Conserve Water. Be Water-wise! (Poster on water conservation)
- (d). Don't wait until it's too late. Protect your family's financial future (Advertisement for Life Insurance)
- (e). Up to 50% more grease cutting power: Fairy Dishwashing liquid (Advertisement for dishwashing liquid)
3. Discuss the parallelism, deixis and other foregrounding devices in the following text and comment on how it impacts the effectiveness of the poem. **(30 marks)**

Let America Be America Again (Langston Hughes)

Let America be America again.
Let it be the dream it used to be.
Let it be the pioneer on the plain
Seeking a home where he himself is free.

(America never was America to me.)

Let America be the dream the dreamers dreamed—
Let it be that great strong land of love
Where never kings connive nor tyrants scheme
That any man be crushed by one above.

(It never was America to me.)

O, let my land be a land where Liberty
Is crowned with no false patriotic wreath,
But opportunity is real, and life is free,
Equality is in the air we breathe.

(There's never been equality for me,
Nor freedom in this "homeland of the free.")

Say, who are you that mumbles in the dark?
And who are you that draws your veil across the stars?

I am the poor white, fooled and pushed apart,
I am the Negro bearing slavery's scars.
I am the red man driven from the land,
I am the immigrant clutching the hope I seek—
And finding only the same old stupid plan
Of dog eat dog, of mighty crush the weak.

I am the farmer, bondsman to the soil.
I am the worker sold to the machine.
I am the Negro, servant to you all.
I am the people, humble, hungry, mean—
Hungry yet today despite the dream.
Beaten yet today—O, Pioneers!
I am the man who never got ahead,
The poorest worker bartered through the years.

O, I'm the man who sailed those early seas
In search of what I meant to be my home—
For I'm the one who left dark Ireland's shore,
And Poland's plain, and England's grassy lea,
And torn from Black Africa's strand I came
To build a "homeland of the free."

Part B

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU ARE REQUIRED TO ANSWER AT LEAST ONE (b) OPTION FROM QUESTIONS 4,5, & 6.

4. EITHER

(a). Critically examine Judith Butler's concept of performativity. Explore its key elements, including the iterative nature of gender, the influence of discourse, and the interplay between agency and constraint. Use examples from contemporary cultural or social contexts to support your analysis. **(33 marks)**

OR

(b). Analyze how Emma Lazarus's *The New Colossus* reflects the themes of objectification and societal roles as discussed in Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* and Laura Mulvey's theory of the male gaze. Consider how the poem portrays the Statue of Liberty as a feminine symbol and explore its implications for gendered identity, agency, and representation. **(33 marks)**

The New Colossus

By Emma Lazarus

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command

The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
“Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!” cries she
With silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

5. **EITHER**

(a). ‘Orientalism played a significant role in strengthening, expanding, and maintaining the British Empire.’ Discuss the above statement with reference to Edward Said’s argument in *Orientalism*. **(33 Marks)**

OR

(b). Engage in a postcolonial reading of the following extract. Support your answer with evidence from the text **(33 Marks)**

Ramanujam was a senior clerk in the Revenue Division Office, and Thanappa had carried letters to that address for over a generation now. His earliest association with Ramanujam was years and years ago. Ramanujam’s wife was away in the village. A card arrived for Ramanujam. Thanappa, as was his custom, glanced through it at the sorting table itself; and, the moment they were ready to start out, went straight to Vinayak Mudali Street, though in the ordinary course over 150 addresses preceded it. He went straight to Ramanujam’s house, knocked on the door and shouted, ‘Postman, sir, postman.’ When Ramanujam opened it, he said, ‘Give me a handful of sugar before I give you this card. Happy father! After all these years of prayers! Don’t complain that it is a daughter. Daughters are God’s gift, you know . . . Kamakshi—lovely name!’

‘Kamakshi,’ he addressed the tall, bashful girl, years later, ‘get your photo ready. Ah so shy! Here is your grandfather’s card asking for your photo. Why should he want it, unless it be . . .’

‘The old gentleman writes rather frequently now, doesn’t he, sir?’ he asked Ramanujam, as he handed him his letter and waited for him to open the envelope and go through its contents. Ramanujam looked worried after reading it. The postman asked, ‘I hope it’s good news?’ He leaned against the veranda pillar, with a stack of undelivered letters still under his arm. Ramanujam said, ‘My father-in-law thinks I am not sufficiently active in finding a husband for my daughter. He has tried one or two places and failed. He thinks I am very indifferent . . .’ ‘Elderly people have their own anxiety,’ the postman replied. ‘The trouble is,’ said Ramanujam, ‘that he has set apart five thousand rupees for this girl’s marriage and is worrying me to find a husband for her immediately. But money is not everything . . .’ ‘No, no,’ echoed the postman; ‘unless the destined hour is at hand, nothing can help . . .’

Day after day for months Thanappa delivered the letters and waited to be told the news. ‘Same old news, Thanappa . . . Horoscopes do not agree . . . They are demanding too much . . .’

Evidently they do not approve of her appearance.’ ‘Appearance! She looks like a queen. Unless one is totally blind . . .’ the postman retorted angrily. The season would be closing, with only three more auspicious dates, the last being May 20. The girl would be seventeen in a few days. The reminders from her grand-father were becoming fiercer. Ramanujam had exhausted all the possibilities and had drawn a blank everywhere. He looked helpless and miserable. ‘Postman,’ he said, ‘I don’t think there is a son-in-law for me anywhere . . .’

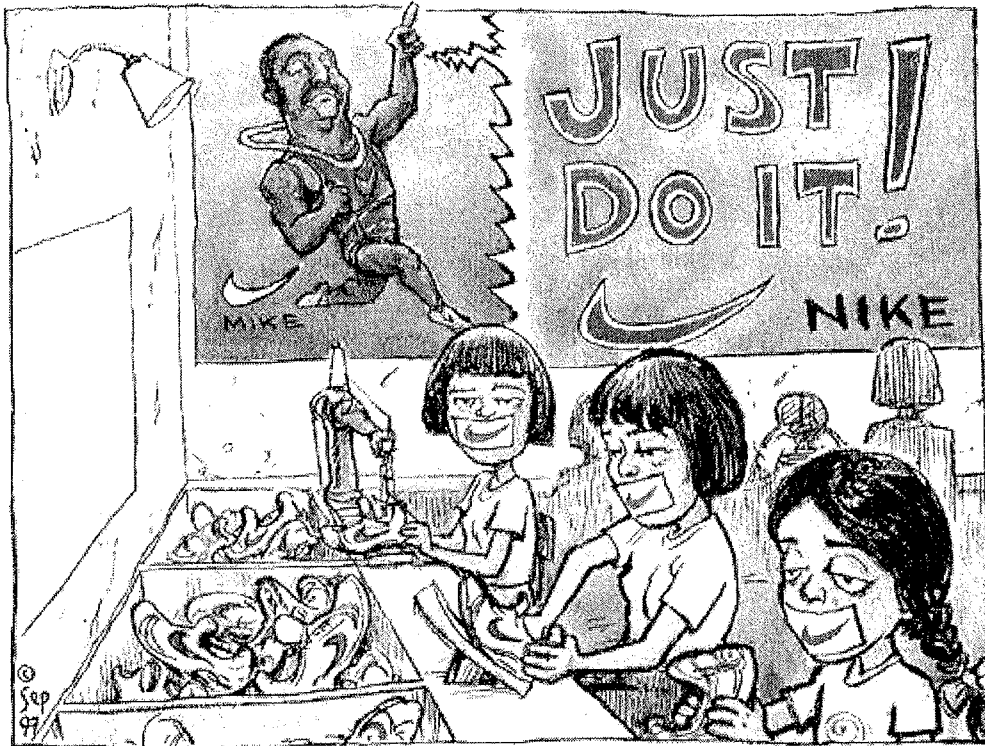
‘Oh, don’t utter inauspicious words, sir,’ the postman said. ‘When God wills it . . .’ He reflected for a while and said, ‘There is a boy in Delhi earning two hundred rupees. Makunda of Temple Street was after him. Makunda and you are of the same subcaste, I believe . . .’

6. EITHER

(a). Write an introduction to Marxism focusing on key features discussed by Karl Marx, using examples from current socio-political contexts. **(34 Marks)**

OR

(b). Undertake a Marxist analysis of the following cartoon making adequate references to both the theory and the cartoon. (34 Marks)



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