

B.A. (Honours) Examination, 2014

Semester - I

English

Course : H-1 (Core)

(Reading Practices)

Time: Three Hours

Full Marks: 40

Questions are of value as indicated in the margin.

Read the poem given below, and attempt the questions that follow.

1. a) A poem should be palpable and mute

As a globed fruit,

Dumb

As old medallions to the thumb,

Silent as the sleeve-worn stone

Of casement ledges where the moss has grown—

A poem should be wordless

As the flight of birds.

*

A poem should be motionless in time

As the moon climbs,

Leaving, as the moon releases

Twig by twig the night-entangled trees,

Leaving, as the moon behind the winter leaves,

Memory by memory the mind—

A poem should be motionless in time

As the moon climbs.

*

A poem should be equal to:

Not true.

For all the history of grief

An empty doorway and a maple leaf.

For love

The leaning grasses and two lights above the sea—

A poem should not mean

But be.

P.T.O.

- i) Comment briefly on the use of repetition in this poem. 3
- ii) What do you think the poet means by "motionless in time"? 5
- iii) What is the relationship between poetry and truth, as given in this poem? 7
- iv) Why do you think the poet ends by saying that a poem "should not mean but be"? 5

b) Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:

Let me imagine, since facts are hard to come by, what would have happened had Shakespeare had a wonderfully gifted sister, called Judith, let us say.... But she was not sent to school. She had no chance of learning grammar and logic, let alone of reading Horace and Virgil. She picked up a book now and then, one of her brother's perhaps, and read a few pages. But then her parents came in and told her to mend stockings or mind the sew and not moon about with books and papers... Perhaps she scribbled some pages in an apple loft on the sly, but was careful to hide them or set fire to them... Soon, however, before she was out of the teens, she was to be betrothed to the son of a neighbouring wool-stapler. She cried out that marriage was hateful to her, and for that was severely beaten by her father... She made up a small parcel of her belongings, let herself down by a rope one summer's night and took the road to London. She was not seventeen... She had the quickest fancy, a gift like her brother's, for the tune of words, Like him she had a taste for the theatre. She stood at the stage door; she wanted to act, she said. Men laughed in her face... Yet her genius was for fiction and lusted to feed abundantly upon the lives of men and women and the study of their ways. At last Nick Greene the actor-manager took pity on her; she found herself with child by that gentleman and so – who shall measure the heat and violence of a poet's heart when caught and tangled in a woman's body? – Killed herself one winter's night...

- i) Comment critically on the genre of this passage. 10
 - ii) What does this passage suggest about the significance of the gender of the poet playwright? 10
2. a) Do we read a work of fiction in the same way we do a work that presents itself as factual? Give examples to justify your position. 10
- or
- b) Is it possible to say contemporary theory gives a very significant role to the reader? Justify. 10
3. Comment critically on *any one*: 10
- i) The distinction between Classical Greek tragedy and Shakespearean tragedy
 - ii) The Epic and the Novel
 - iii) Plot as a constituent in *either* Drama *or* Novel.