

八十四學年度 文學研究所 乙 組碩士班研究生入學考試

科目 英文 科號 4206 共 六 頁第 一 頁 *請在試卷【答案卷】內作答

English

Section I: Reading Comprehension (40%)

Choose the most appropriate answer to the question following each passage.

1. The symmetry of form attainable in pure fiction cannot so readily be achieved in a narration essentially having less to do with fable than with fact. Truth uncompromisingly told will always have its ragged edges; hence the conclusion of such a narration is apt to be less finished than an architectural finial.

Q. Which is true?

- a. A novel based on a true story is usually inferior to one of pure invention.
- b. The question is that of the relation between form and subject matter in fictional writing.
- c. Truth is always stranger than pure fiction.
- d. The passage touches particularly on the architectonic representation of reality in art.

2. In this matter of writing, resolve as one may to keep to the main road, some bypaths have an enticement not readily to be withstood. I am going to err into such a bypath. If the reader will keep me company I shall be glad. At the least, we can promise ourselves that pleasure which is wickedly said to be in sinning, for a literary sin the divergence will be.

Q. The narrator in this passage is

- a. enticing the reader to follow his erotic fantasies.
- b. making a statement to the effect that a poetic license should be granted to a sinning literary artist, such as the French dramatist Jean Genet.
- c. adherent to the tenet that the major function of literature is to provide pleasure.
- d. preparing the reader for some narrative digression he is heading for.

3. Striptease--at least Parisian striptease--is based on a contradiction: Woman is desexualized at the very moment when she is stripped naked...It is only the time taken in shedding clothes which makes voyeurs of the public; but here, as in any mystifying spectacle, the decor, the props and the stereotypes intervene to contradict the initially provocative intention and eventually

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bury it in insignificance: evil is advertised the better to impede and exorcise it.

Q. Which is true?

- a. The significance of the evil of desexualizing women in pornography should not be belittled.
- b. A mystifying spectacle, such as a striptease, may end in its own undoing, that is, its own dismystification.
- c. The Parisian public is induced to evil because of the contradictory ambiance of the city.
- d. Striptease should be condemned as evil and should be exorcised.

4. One of the few historical elements recurrent in the textbooks from which the prospective scientist learns his field is the attribution of particular natural phenomena to the historical personages who first discovered them. As a result of this and other aspects of their training, discovery becomes for many scientists an important goal. To make a discovery is to achieve one of the closest approximations to a property right that the scientific career affords. Professional prestige is often closely associated with these acquisitions. Small wonder, then, that acrimonious disputes about priority and independence in discovery have often marred the normally placid tenor of scientific communication.

Q. We learn from the passage that

- a. The scientists' community is one which reveres the property right as indication of professional distinction.
- b. Dialogues, or even disputes, are normally employed by scientists to peacefully solve the question about priority and independence in discovery.
- c. Acquisition of fame and profit weighs as heavily upon many scientists as upon people in other fields of work.
- d. Attribution of the first discovery is always done with little dispute.

5. Consequently, the most perfect education, in my opinion, is such an exercise of the understanding as is best calculated to strengthen the body and form the heart. Or, in other words, to enable the individual to attain such habits of virtue as will render it independent. In fact, it is a farce to call any being virtuous whose virtues do not result from the exercise of its own reason. This was Rousseau's opinion respecting men; I extend it to women, and confidently assert that they have been drawn out of their sphere by false refinement, and not by an endeavour to acquire masculine qualities.

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Q. The writer is concerned here chiefly with

- a. a perfect education which exercises both body and heart.
- b. refined femininity.
- c. independence and reason as Rousseauistic virtues.
- d. women's reluctance to "acquire masculine qualities".

6. A final and perhaps stronger criticism is that Brecht's basic disposition--to attack and to curse--was relentless against Hitler, but that he deployed no similar assault against Stalin, despite the death of dear friends in the Soviet Union. It's true that Brecht was in Russia only briefly, but he followed the Soviet scene with keen interest. When Walter Benjamin asked him, in 1938, if his support for the Russian program might need changing, he answered that "unfortunately or God be praised, whichever you prefer;" available news had not yet coalesced into certainty. Meanwhile, as a realist, as an especially strong dreamer, he would take his courage from setbacks and put up with a great deal of adverse evidence before quitting.

Q. Which is true?

- a. Brecht withheld criticism of Stalin even in the late 1930s.
- b. Brecht was disinclined to relentless personal attacks and curses.
- c. The "available news" in the passage refers to the German invasion of the Soviet Union at that time.
- d. Setbacks and adverse evidence were what compelled Brecht to doubts about his own vision.

7. It was a life deliberately organized on her terms. The terms she had been handed by society--Calvinist Protestantism, Romanticism, the nineteenth-century corseting of women's bodies, choices, and sexuality--could spell insanity to a woman of genius. What this one had to do was retranslate her own unorthodox, subversive, sometimes volcanic propensities into a dialect called metaphor: her native language "Tell all the truth --but tell it slant--." It is always what is under pressure in us, especially under pressure of concealment--that explodes in poetry.

Q. Which is true?

- a. The writer describes the idiosyncratic writings of the woman poet she is talking about as "a dialect called metaphor."

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- b. The woman poet in question here broke away from the restraints the nineteenth-century American society imposed on women.
- c. A nineteenth-century woman of genius was very likely to write insane poetry.
- d. "Tell it slant" means writing poetry which suppresses true emotions and feelings in words.

8. I should not have affixed so comprehensive a title to these few remarks, necessarily wanting in any completeness upon a subject the full consideration of which would carry us far, did I not seem to discover a pretext for my temerity in the interesting pamphlet lately published under this name by Mr. Walter Besant. Mr. Besant's lecture at the Royal Institution--the original form of his pamphlet--appears to indicate that many persons are interested in the art of fiction, and are not indifferent to such remarks, as those who practise it may attempt to make about it. I am therefore anxious not to lose the benefit of this favourable association, and to edge in a few words under cover of the attention which Mr. Besant is sure to have excited.

Q. Which is true?

- a. "This favourable association" refers to the author's friendship with Mr. Walter Besant.
- b. The author confesses that he has committed the error of going to great lengths to deal with an abstruse topic.
- c. According to the author, fiction writers tend to ignore the principles and rules demanded of their art.
- d. We can learn from the passage that the author adopts for his present work the same title that Walter Besant used for his pamphlet.

9. Although to be driven back upon oneself is an uneasy affair at best, rather like trying to cross a border with borrowed credentials, it seems to me now the one condition necessary to the beginnings of real self-respect. Most of our platitudes notwithstanding, self-deception remains the most difficult deception. The tricks that work on others count for nothing in that very well-lit back alley where one keeps assignations with oneself: no winning smiles will do here, no prettily drawn lists of good intentions. One shuffles flashily but in vain through one's marked cards--the kindness done for the wrong reason, the apparent triumph which involved no real effort, the seemingly heroic act into which one had been shamed.

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Q. Which is false?

- a. Real self-respect begins with a face-off with one's self.
- b. Most of our platitudes tell us that self-deception is the most difficult deception.
- c. The "very well-lit back alley" is a metaphor for intent self-scrutiny.
- d. We often resort to "winning smiles" and "prettily drawn lists of good intentions" to gain the approval of others.

10. In our time it is broadly true that political writing is bad writing. Where it is not true, it will generally be found that the writer is some kind of rebel, expressing his private opinions and not a "party line." Orthodoxy, of whatever color, seems to demand a lifeless, imitative style. The political dialects to be found in pamphlets, leading articles, manifestoes, White Papers and the speeches of undersecretaries do, of course, vary from party to party, but they are all alike in that one almost never finds in them a fresh, vivid, homemade turn of speech.

Q. Which would not be a "homemade turn of speech"?

- a. A trite party line.
- b. An insurgent pamphlet.
- c. An original panegyric.
- d. A robust critique.

Section II: Abstract (25%)

Summarize, in a paragraph of 100-150 words of your own, the key ideas of the following passage.

As Orlando discovers, poetry and nature, language and identity, must be learned together. This is the point of the vacillating rhetoric and the epicene protagonist of [Virginia] Woolf's novel. Orlando's identity, like her poem, is a palimpsest. It is "compounded of many humours," composed of "odds and ends," a "meeting-place of dissemblables". Orlando continually wavers between beliefs, changes or disguises her sex, moves in harmony with and at odds with the times. So too Woolf's novel offers support for differing positions without arguing for any one. She writes: "Society is the most powerful concoction in the world and society has no existence whatsoever"; there is not much difference between the sexes, for Orlando remains "fundamentally the same" throughout, and the difference is "one of great profundity"; "Clothes

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are but a symbol of something hid deep beneath," and clothes "wear us," changing "our view of the world and the world's view of us". Such oscillations on the thematic and narrative levels of this novel are presented metaphorically in the recurring image of the perpetually swaying arras and in the alternation of light and dark in Orlando's cab ride with Alexander Pope. It is in the midst of all these contrarities, in the midst of such violent shifts in viewpoint, that Woolf offers her famous androgynous statement, not as a metaphysical or feminist theory, not as a resolution to or a synthesis of contrarities, but as a way to remain suspended between opposed beliefs: "For here again we come to a dilemma. Different though the sexes are, they intermix. In every human being a vacillation from one sex to the other takes place, and often it is only the clothes that keep the male or female likeness, while underneath the sex is the very opposite of what it is above". Androgyny embodies this oscillation between positions. It figures a basic ambiguity, not only a sexual ambiguity but a textual one as well. Androgyny is a refusal to choose.

Section III: Composition (35%)

Comment on the words "poetry and nature, language and identity, must be learned together," taken from the above passage.