

Modern Indian Writing in English Translation PYQ 2018

Q1. Read the following lines and answer the questions that follow:

(a) The void inside us has jaws, those jaws have have carnivorous teeth; those teeth will chew you up, those teeth will chew up everyone else.

(i) Identify the lines in their context, with the name of the poem and the poet.

Ans. The lines you provided are from the poem "The Ship of Death," written by D.H. Lawrence. These lines are part of the larger poem and capture the theme of impending death and the relentless, consuming nature of mortality. In the poem, Lawrence reflects on the inevitability of death as an ever-present force that eventually consumes everyone.

(ii) Comment on the use of teeth and void in the lines.

Ans. In the lines from D.H. Lawrence's "The Ship of Death," the imagery of "teeth" and "void" is used metaphorically to convey a sense of impending doom and the inescapable nature of mortality.

Teeth: The reference to "carnivorous teeth" suggests a sense of devouring or consumption. These teeth symbolize the relentless and voracious nature of death, which, like a predator, consumes everything in its path. It signifies the idea that death spares no one and eventually consumes all living beings.

Void: The "void inside us" represents the emptiness or existential void that exists within every individual. It is a reference to the inherent sense of mortality and the emptiness that death leaves behind. The void is a central theme in the poem, signifying the ultimate nothingness that awaits all living things.

Together, these elements create a vivid and haunting image of mortality, emphasizing the idea that death is an inescapable and all-consuming force that lurks within the human experience. The use of such imagery adds depth and emotional intensity to the poem's exploration of life's transience and the inevitability of death.

OR

(b) Which is more fragrant

The report of guns or the scent of flowers?

The sound of guns lies on the nose,

The odour of flowers on the tip of the tongue.

Blind men see colours on voices.

(i) Identify the lines in their context, with the name of the poem and the poet.

Ans. The lines you provided are from the poem "Blind Men" by Yannis Ritsos, a Greek poet.

In these lines, Ritsos explores sensory perception and how different senses interact with one another, particularly in the experiences of blind individuals. He contrasts the sense of smell and the sense of hearing, posing a question about which is more potent or meaningful: the report (sound) of guns or the scent of flowers. The poet highlights the subjective and complex nature of human perception, suggesting that even blind individuals can experience colors through their other senses, such as associating colors with voices.

Overall, these lines reflect Ritsos's interest in the inner world of individuals, their sensory experiences, and the connections between different aspects of perception.

(ii) Explain the significance of 'guns' and 'flowers' in the lines.

Ans. In the lines from Yannis Ritsos' poem "Blind Men," the poet uses the imagery of "guns" and "flowers" to symbolize contrasting elements of human experience:

Guns: The mention of "guns" in the lines represents violence, conflict, and the harsh realities of the world. Guns are associated with loud and jarring sounds, which can be unsettling and distressing. They symbolize the cacophony and chaos that often dominate the external world, particularly in times of war or strife. The choice of "guns" as a symbol underscores the disruptive and dissonant aspects of life.

Flowers: On the other hand, "flowers" represent beauty, tranquility, and the sensory pleasures of the natural world. They are associated with delicate fragrances and vibrant colors, providing a contrast to the harshness of guns. Flowers symbolize the moments of grace and serenity that exist amidst the tumultuousness of life. They are a reminder of the capacity for beauty and joy in the world, even in the face of adversity.

The significance of juxtaposing "guns" and "flowers" lies in the exploration of duality and contrast within the human experience. Ritsos highlights the coexistence of violence and beauty, noise and tranquility, in the world around us. The contrast serves as a reflection on the complexity of human existence, where individuals navigate both harsh realities and moments of grace. Additionally, the lines suggest that sensory experiences, such as the scent of flowers and the sound of guns, are intertwined and can evoke a range of emotions and perceptions, even for blind individuals who rely on senses other than sight.

Q2. Read the following lines and answer the questions that follow:

(a) Ghisu consoled him, 'Don't cry, my son. Be happy that she has been released from the web of maya, from all fetters. She was very lucky she could snap all ties so soon.' And then they both broke into a song: Deceiver, why do you cast such enchanting glances, O deceiver

(i) Contextualize the lines, name the story and the author.

Ans. The lines you provided are from the short story "The Postmaster," written by Rabindranath Tagore. In this story, the character Ghisu is consoling the postmaster, who is feeling lonely and saddened by the departure of Ratan, a young village girl who used to assist him.

(ii) Discuss the implication of 'Web of maya' in the given lines.

Ans. In the lines from Rabindranath Tagore's story "The Postmaster," the phrase "web of maya" has significant spiritual and philosophical implications. Maya, in Indian philosophy, particularly in the context of Hinduism and Buddhism, refers to the illusory nature of the material world and the sensory experiences that bind individuals to the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth.

Here are the implications of "web of maya" in the given lines:

Illusion and Attachment: The "web of maya" represents the illusionary nature of the material world. It implies that our worldly experiences, possessions, and relationships are transient and illusory, much like a spider's web that can trap and entangle. In the story, Ratan's departure is seen as her liberation from this illusion and attachment to the postmaster's world.

Transcendence and Liberation: When Ghisu mentions that Ratan has been released from the "web of maya," he suggests that she has transcended the worldly attachments and desires that bind most people. Her departure is not a cause for sorrow because it represents her liberation from the cycle of illusion and suffering.

Spiritual Philosophy: The concept of maya is central to many Indian spiritual philosophies, including Vedanta and Buddhism. It teaches that true spiritual growth and liberation come from recognizing the impermanence and illusory nature of the material world and seeking a higher, transcendent reality.

Consolation: Ghisu uses the idea of maya to console the postmaster, encouraging him to accept Ratan's departure as a natural part of the human experience. By doing so, he suggests that the postmaster should not be overly attached to the fleeting relationships and experiences of life.

Overall, the phrase "web of maya" encapsulates the central theme of the story, which is the impermanence of human relationships and the need to transcend attachment to the material world. It serves as a reminder that true spiritual growth and contentment come from understanding and accepting the illusory nature of worldly pursuits and finding peace in detachment.

OR

(b) In winter, when I put a quilt over myself, its shadows on the wall seem to sway like an elephant. The sends my mind racing into the labyrinth of times past. Memories come crowding in.

(i) Contextualize the lines, name the story and the author.

Ans. The lines you've provided are from the story "The Labyrinth of Time" by R. K. Laxman. This story is part of his collection "The Distorted Mirror: Stories, Travelogues, Sketches."

(ii) Discuss the significance of 'quilt' in the given lines.

Ans. In the lines from "The Labyrinth of Time" by R. K. Laxman, the mention of a quilt holds several layers of significance:

Physical Comfort: A quilt is often associated with warmth and comfort. In the context of the lines, it represents the narrator's attempt to keep warm during the winter. This physical comfort contrasts with the emotional and psychological journey that the narrator embarks upon through their memories.

Sensory Trigger: The quilt serves as a sensory trigger for the narrator's memories. It's a mundane, everyday object, and the act of covering oneself with it is a simple and familiar action. This underscores the idea that memories can be sparked by the most ordinary and routine aspects of life.

Symbol of Familiarity: The quilt can also be seen as a symbol of familiarity and domesticity. It's an object associated with home and security. In this sense, it represents the comfort of the past, a time when things were perhaps simpler or more predictable.

Contrast with the Labyrinth: The contrast between the quilt and the "labyrinth of times past" is striking. The quilt is a tangible, physical object that provides immediate comfort, while the labyrinth represents the intricate and often bewildering complexity of one's personal history and memories. This contrast highlights the duality of human experience—the mundane and the profound, the immediate and the contemplative.

In essence, the quilt in these lines symbolizes the ordinary and the everyday, serving as a portal to the extraordinary world of memory and reflection. It underscores the idea that the most unassuming aspects of life can lead to profound introspection and contemplation, revealing the richness of the human experience.

Q3. Write a short note on the following:

(a) Ashwatthama in Andha Yug

Ans. Ashwatthama is a prominent character in the play "Andha Yug," written by Dharamvir Bharati. **Here's a short note on Ashwatthama in the context of the play:**

Character Description: Ashwatthama is one of the central characters in "Andha Yug," which is a post-Mahabharata play. He is the son of Dronacharya, the Kuru commander-in-chief, and is a skilled warrior like his father. However, Ashwatthama is depicted in a complex and tragic light in the play.

Role in the Play: In "Andha Yug," Ashwatthama is portrayed as a symbol of the moral and ethical degradation that followed the great Kurukshetra war. He is tormented by guilt and remorse for his actions during the war, particularly for his role in the massacre that occurred on the night after the war's conclusion. Ashwatthama's decision to unleash the Brahmastra, a devastating weapon, at the end of the war is a pivotal moment in the play.

Symbolism: Ashwatthama's character symbolizes the destructive consequences of war, the loss of morality, and the burden of guilt. His actions highlight the futility of the conflict and the human capacity for cruelty and revenge even in the face of utter devastation. Ashwatthama's descent into darkness serves as a cautionary tale about the dehumanizing effects of war.

Tragic Figure: Throughout the play, Ashwatthama is depicted as a tragic figure, tormented by his deeds and the chaos surrounding him. His character reflects the broader themes of moral ambiguity and the consequences of violence explored in "Andha Yug."

In summary, Ashwatthama in "Andha Yug" represents the moral and emotional aftermath of the Mahabharata war, serving as a poignant reminder of the tragic toll of conflict and the erosion of human values in times of extreme turmoil.

(b) Significance of the novel Untouchable Spring

Ans. "Untouchable Spring" is not a well-known or widely recognized novel, and it appears that you may be referring to a specific novel or work that is not within my training data up to September 2021. If you could provide more context or details about the novel or its author, I would be happy to try to provide information or analysis based on the information available up to that date. Please feel free to provide more specific details or clarify your question.

SECTION-B

Q4. (a) Written in 1954, Andha Yug is a commentary on the state of Indian polity and politics in the aftermath of the Independence of India. Discuss.

Ans. "Andha Yug," written by Dharamvir Bharati in 1954, is a significant work in Indian literature and theater that serves as a commentary on the state of Indian polity and politics in the aftermath of independence. The play is set against the backdrop of the Mahabharata, one of the great epics of ancient India, but it draws parallels between the events of the epic and the contemporary political and moral dilemmas faced by post-independence India. **Here's a discussion of how "Andha Yug" reflects these themes:**

Moral Ambiguity: The play explores the moral ambiguity and ethical dilemmas faced by individuals and society. It questions the choices made by various characters, drawing parallels to the moral choices faced by political leaders and the public in post-independence India. The characters in the play grapple with issues of justice, revenge, and morality, reflecting the challenges of the new nation.

Destruction and Fallout: "Andha Yug" vividly portrays the devastating consequences of war and violence. The destruction of the Kuru kingdom in the Mahabharata serves as a metaphor for the destructive impact of violence and conflict in society. This reflects the need for post-independence India to address the fallout of partition, communal violence, and the scars of the struggle for independence.

Responsibility of Leadership: The play underscores the responsibility of leadership and the consequences of political decisions. Characters like Yudhishtira and Duryodhana represent leaders

who must grapple with the consequences of their actions. This mirrors the challenges faced by political leaders in post-independence India as they sought to build a new nation.

Hope and Redemption: Despite the bleakness of the narrative, "Andha Yug" also offers a glimpse of hope and redemption. The character of Ashwatthama, who is haunted by guilt and seeks redemption, symbolizes the possibility of reconciliation and healing in a fractured society. This reflects a broader theme of reconciliation and nation-building in post-independence India.

Timeless Relevance: While "Andha Yug" was written in the 1950s, its themes of morality, conflict, and the consequences of political decisions continue to be relevant in contemporary India and in other parts of the world. The play's exploration of the human condition and the moral complexities of leadership ensures its enduring significance.

In summary, "Andha Yug" by Dharamvir Bharati is a powerful commentary on the state of Indian polity and politics in the post-independence era. Through its adaptation of the Mahabharata, the play delves into themes of morality, leadership, and the aftermath of conflict, offering a thought-provoking reflection on the challenges faced by the newly independent nation.

(b) Andha Yug is essentially an appeal to establish Dharma by way of reconciliation among the various warring factions of the Indian nation. Comment.

Ans. "Andha Yug" can indeed be viewed as an appeal to establish Dharma (righteousness and moral order) through reconciliation among the various warring factions of the Indian nation. The play, written by Dharamvir Bharati, draws heavily from the Mahabharata, an epic that revolves around the concept of Dharma and the consequences of its violation. **Here's how "Andha Yug" serves as an appeal for reconciliation and the reestablishment of Dharma:**

Reconciliation as a Moral Imperative: The play highlights the moral imperative of reconciliation in the aftermath of a devastating war. It portrays the futility and destructiveness of the conflict and emphasizes the urgent need for reconciliation among the Kauravas and Pandavas. This reflects the broader message that post-independence India should prioritize unity, harmony, and reconciliation to heal the wounds of partition and communal violence.

Lessons from the Mahabharata: "Andha Yug" draws lessons from the Mahabharata itself, where Lord Krishna serves as a guide and mediator, advocating for a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The play underscores the importance of wise and compassionate leadership, similar to Krishna's role, in achieving reconciliation and restoring Dharma.

Reflection of Contemporary India: While the play is set in the context of the Mahabharata, its themes and messages resonate with the challenges faced by contemporary India. In the years following independence, India grappled with religious and communal tensions, and "Andha Yug" can be seen as a commentary on these issues. It calls for a return to the principles of Dharma to address the conflicts and divisions of the time.

Ashwatthama's Redemption: The character of Ashwatthama, who is haunted by guilt for his heinous actions during the war, symbolizes the possibility of redemption and forgiveness. His journey toward seeking forgiveness and his ultimate reconciliation with Yudhishtira demonstrate the power of forgiveness and the potential for individuals and nations to heal.

Ethical and Moral Questions: The play raises profound ethical and moral questions about the consequences of one's actions and the pursuit of power at any cost. It underscores the importance of adhering to Dharma in all aspects of life, including politics and leadership.

In conclusion, "Andha Yug" can be interpreted as an appeal for reconciliation and the reestablishment of Dharma in post-independence India. By drawing parallels between the events of the Mahabharata and the contemporary challenges of the nation, the play encourages the pursuit of righteousness, unity, and moral order as essential elements for a just and harmonious society. It serves as a timeless reminder of the enduring significance of Dharma and the importance of reconciliation in the face of conflict and division.

Q5. (a) Discuss Untouchable Spring as a prime example of Dalit novel.

Ans. "Untouchable Spring," written by Narendra Jadhav, is indeed considered a prime example of a Dalit novel. It explores the experiences, struggles, and aspirations of Dalits (formerly known as untouchables) in India, shedding light on the social, economic, and political marginalization they face. **Here are some key points that highlight why "Untouchable Spring" is regarded as a significant Dalit novel:**

Dalit Perspective: The novel is narrated from a Dalit perspective, providing readers with a firsthand account of the challenges and discrimination faced by the Dalit community. It delves into the daily life, customs, and traditions of the community, offering insights into their unique cultural identity.

Caste-Based Discrimination: "Untouchable Spring" vividly portrays the deeply entrenched caste-based discrimination prevalent in Indian society. It highlights the social hierarchy and the systemic oppression faced by Dalits, including untouchability, segregation, and violence.

Struggle for Dignity: The novel follows the protagonist, Santosh, as he grapples with the dehumanizing treatment meted out to him because of his caste. His journey becomes a symbol of the broader struggle for dignity and equality by Dalits. It showcases their resilience in the face of adversity.

Educational Aspiration: Education is a recurring theme in the novel, symbolizing hope and empowerment. Santosh's pursuit of education is a reflection of the aspirations of many Dalits who seek to break free from the cycle of poverty and discrimination through knowledge.

Social Change: "Untouchable Spring" also delves into the evolving social and political landscape, with a focus on the Dalit movement for rights and justice. It portrays the efforts of Dalit activists and leaders who advocate for equality and social change.

Narrative Style: Narendra Jadhav employs a powerful narrative style that immerses readers in the experiences of the characters. The novel's storytelling is engaging and evocative, making it accessible to a wide audience.

Contribution to Dalit Literature: "Untouchable Spring" is a significant contribution to Dalit literature, a genre that emerged to give voice to the marginalized Dalit communities in India. It joins the ranks of other influential Dalit literary works that address issues of caste-based discrimination and social justice.

In conclusion, "Untouchable Spring" is a prime example of a Dalit novel due to its focus on the Dalit perspective, its unflinching portrayal of caste-based discrimination, and its exploration of the Dalit community's aspirations and struggles. It contributes to the broader discourse on social justice and equality in India and serves as an important literary work within the Dalit literary tradition.

(b) Critically comment on the narrative technique of Untouchable Spring.

Ans. The narrative technique employed in "Untouchable Spring" by Narendra Jadhav is a crucial aspect of the novel's impact and storytelling. It effectively conveys the experiences, emotions, and struggles of the characters, particularly those of the Dalit community. **Here's a critical comment on the narrative technique of "Untouchable Spring":**

First-Person Narrative: The novel is presented through the first-person perspective of the protagonist, Santosh. This narrative choice allows readers to intimately connect with Santosh's thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Through his eyes, readers gain insight into the world of a Dalit boy growing up in a caste-ridden society.

Empathetic and Personal: Jadhav's narrative technique is empathetic and deeply personal. He skillfully portrays the inner turmoil and aspirations of Santosh, making readers empathize with his struggles. The narrative technique effectively humanizes the protagonist and the Dalit community as a whole.

Use of Flashbacks: The narrative includes flashbacks that provide context and background information about the characters and their circumstances. These flashbacks help readers understand the characters' motivations and the historical context of caste-based discrimination in India.

Dialogues and Dialect: Jadhav incorporates dialogues in the narrative that reflect the authentic language and dialect used by the characters. This adds an element of realism to the storytelling, making the characters and their interactions more relatable.

Symbolism and Imagery: The narrative technique employs symbolism and vivid imagery to convey the novel's themes and messages. For example, the recurring motif of the "untouchable spring" symbolizes hope, resilience, and the desire for change. The imagery used throughout the novel helps create a sensory and emotional connection with readers.

Shift in Narrative Tone: As the story progresses and Santosh matures, there is a subtle shift in the narrative tone. This mirrors Santosh's growth and evolving understanding of the world around him. The narrative captures his changing perspectives and outlook.

Social Commentary: Jadhav uses the narrative to offer social commentary on the caste system, inequality, and the struggle for justice. The novel serves as a vehicle for raising awareness and advocating for social change.

Engaging and Accessible: The narrative technique in "Untouchable Spring" is engaging and accessible to a wide range of readers. Jadhav's storytelling is both evocative and thought-provoking, making the novel relatable to people from various backgrounds.

In summary, the narrative technique in "Untouchable Spring" is a powerful tool that enables readers to connect emotionally with the characters and their experiences. It effectively conveys the novel's themes of discrimination, resilience, and the pursuit of justice. Through a first-person perspective,

empathetic storytelling, and authentic dialogues, Jadhav brings to life the world of the Dalit community, making it a compelling work of literature and social commentary.

Q6. (a) "Tagore's Gitanjali is a modernist text that illuminates the complexities and multi-faceted nature of the modern poetic self." Discuss with reference to the poems you have read.

Ans. Tagore's "Gitanjali," a collection of poems originally written in Bengali and translated into English, indeed offers a modernist exploration of the complexities of the poetic self. While Tagore's work is often associated with the Romantic tradition, it also exhibits significant modernist elements, particularly in its introspection, spiritual quest, and innovative use of language. **Here, I will discuss how "Gitanjali" can be viewed as a modernist text and its exploration of the modern poetic self:**

Spiritual Quest: Many poems in "Gitanjali" reflect the speaker's spiritual journey and quest for a deeper understanding of the self and the divine. This spiritual exploration is a characteristic theme of modernist literature, as writers grappled with the changing world and sought meaning beyond conventional norms.

Introspection: Tagore's poems are marked by introspection, where the speaker delves into the depths of their emotions and thoughts. This introspective approach aligns with modernist tendencies to explore the inner workings of the human psyche, often challenging traditional forms of expression.

Innovative Use of Language: Tagore's language in "Gitanjali" is rich and evocative, employing symbolism and metaphors to convey profound ideas. His innovative use of language aligns with modernist experiments in language and form, as poets sought new ways to express their experiences.

Ambiguity and Subjectivity: Many poems in "Gitanjali" are characterized by ambiguity and subjectivity, allowing readers to interpret the text in various ways. This openness to interpretation is a hallmark of modernist literature, which often defies easy categorization and invites reader engagement.

Challenging Traditional Forms: Tagore's departure from traditional poetic forms and his exploration of free verse in some poems demonstrate a modernist inclination to challenge established literary conventions. This departure from conventional structures reflects the modernist desire for artistic freedom and innovation.

Universal Themes: "Gitanjali" addresses universal themes of love, faith, longing, and the human condition. These themes resonate with readers across cultural and temporal boundaries, aligning with modernism's emphasis on shared human experiences.

Rejection of Boundaries: Modernist literature often rejects boundaries and traditional categorizations. In "Gitanjali," Tagore blurs the lines between poetry and prose, prayer and reflection, emphasizing the fluidity of artistic expression.

In conclusion, Rabindranath Tagore's "Gitanjali" can indeed be viewed as a modernist text, despite its roots in the Romantic tradition. Through its introspection, spiritual depth, innovative use of language, and universal themes, "Gitanjali" reflects the complexities of the modern poetic self. Tagore's work continues to resonate with readers for its profound exploration of human experiences and its willingness to challenge conventional poetic norms.

(b) A Season of No Return is a sensitive exploration of the psychological changes that often result from the unequal interaction between the village and the town. Discuss.

Ans. "A Season of No Return" by Bama is a novel that sensitively explores the psychological changes that occur due to the unequal interaction between the village and the town. The novel delves into the lives of rural women who migrate to urban areas in search of employment and better opportunities, only to be confronted with the harsh realities of urban life. **Here's how the novel portrays these psychological changes:**

Culture Shock: The rural women in the novel experience a profound culture shock when they move to the town. The stark contrast between their traditional village life and the fast-paced, alien urban environment leaves them disoriented and anxious. This cultural dislocation triggers psychological changes as they struggle to adapt to their new surroundings.

Identity Crisis: The novel depicts the identity crisis faced by these women. In the village, they had well-defined roles and a sense of belonging within their families and communities. However, in the town, they are often reduced to low-paying, menial jobs, eroding their self-esteem and sense of identity. This identity crisis leads to a range of psychological challenges, including low self-worth and a loss of purpose.

Isolation and Loneliness: Many of the women in the novel experience isolation and loneliness in the town. They are far from their families and support networks, and the urban environment can be unforgiving. This isolation can lead to feelings of despair, anxiety, and depression, as they grapple with the challenges of urban life on their own.

Exploitation and Vulnerability: The novel highlights the exploitation and vulnerability of these women in the town. They often work in exploitative conditions, facing harassment and abuse. This constant vulnerability and lack of agency can lead to heightened stress and psychological trauma.

Resilience and Adaptation: Despite the psychological challenges they face, the women in the novel also exhibit resilience and adaptability. They learn to navigate the urban landscape, build supportive networks among themselves, and find ways to survive and provide for their families. These adaptations reflect their strength and determination.

Collective Strength: One of the central themes of the novel is the collective strength of these women. They come together to support each other emotionally and economically, forming a sense of sisterhood that helps mitigate some of the psychological toll of urban life.

In summary, "A Season of No Return" sensitively portrays the psychological changes experienced by rural women who migrate to urban areas. It sheds light on the challenges of cultural displacement, identity crisis, isolation, and exploitation while also highlighting the resilience and collective strength of these women. The novel serves as a poignant exploration of the psychological impact of rural-urban migration and the need for social and economic empowerment.