

ORIENTAL STUDIES TRIPOS Part II

South Asian Studies

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Wednesday 3 June 2009 09.00 – 12.00

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**SA.25 SPECIAL SUBJECT IN SOUTH ASIAN LITERATURE**

*Candidates should answer **THREE** questions.*

*All questions carry **equal** weight.*

*Write your number **not** your name on the cover sheet of **each** Answer Book.*

**STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS**

*20 Page Answer Book x 1*

*Rough Work Pad*

**You may not start to read the questions  
printed on the subsequent pages of this  
question paper until instructed that you may  
do so by the Invigilator.**

1. Compare Dalit literature in Hindi and Marathi both in terms of historical development and literary aesthetics. Use at least one text from each linguistic region.
2. How does contemporary Dalit literature complicate Mendelsohn and Vicziany's claims that a new 'civic tolerance' to caste identity has arisen in Indian cities?
3. How would you compare Jotirao Phule's account of low-caste history and the origins of untouchability to those of Bhimrao Ambedkar?
4. Discuss the role of the *reader's* identity and how it might affect the process of reading Dalit literature.
5. Discuss the dilemma of the contemporary Dalit intellectual in light of Gyan Pandey's work on the Dalit journalist Chandrabhan Prasad.
6. Most Dalit literature is written by members of the middle class. Does this call into question its claims to be representative of the 'Dalit experience'?
7. How have Dalit writers used short-stories to intervene in the debates surrounding low-caste reservation?
8. How does Dr. Dharmvir use the bhakti poet-sant Kabir to critique the Hindi literary establishment?
9. Do the majority of Dalits agree with Kancha Ilaiah's assertion that Dalits are not Hindu? Discuss the significance of this debate on the Dalit community's religious identity.
10. Should Premchand's stories such as *Kafan* be considered a part of Dalit literature?
11. What was the importance of the Adi Hindu movement in the historical development of Hindi Dalit literature?
12. Why have some Dalit literary critics described the autobiographical genre as oppressive for Dalit writers?
13. How have Dalit communities in north India traditionally employed narratives of Dalit heroines such as Jhalkaribai, and how have these narratives of the Dalit heroine changed with the rise of the Bahujan Samaj Party?
14. Would you agree with S. Anand's claim that Dalit literature has become a consumer product rather than a revolutionary movement? Why or why not?

15. Should rural Dalit journals be considered part of Dalit literature? How does their literary aesthetic differ from mainstream Dalit literature such as autobiographies, short-stories or literary criticism?
16. How does the portrayal of Shambook in Periyar Lalayee Singh's drama *Shambook Vadh* compare to portrayals of Shambook in mainstream Hindu texts and previous Dalit writings?
17. Discuss the importance of *chetna* in the context of Dalit literary aesthetics.
18. How would you compare the tone of Bama's writings to those of north Indian Dalit writers? Use textual examples in your analysis.

**END OF PAPER**