

ORIENTAL STUDIES TRIPOS Part II

South Asian Studies

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Monday 9 June 2008      09.00 – 12.00

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

*Candidates should answer **three** questions.*

*All questions are of **equal** value.*

*Write your number **not** your name on the cover sheet of **each** Section booklet.*

**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. 'The medieval bhakti poet Kabir was the first Dalit poet.' Discuss this statement in light of the writings of Dr. Dharmvir.
2. **EITHER:** (a) How does the expression of emotions such as 'shame' and 'anger' in Dalit autobiographies reveal the way the Dalit subject negotiates his own positionality? Include examples of texts from two different linguistic regions (Hindi, Marathi and/or Tamil).  
**OR:** (b) What is the significance of the autobiographical genre to the Dalit literary movement?
3. Discuss the role of Buddhism in Dalit political mobilisation.
4. Compare Jotirao Phule's interpretation of ancient Indian history and the origins of untouchability with the views of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar.
5. What role does the pamphlet play in the Dalit literary movement and how does this popular genre relate to Dalit autobiographical literature?
6. What is the significance of '*svanubhuti*' to Dalit literature?
7. Compare the characterisation of Shambook in Swami Achutanand's *Ramrajya Nyaya* and Periyar Lalayee Singh and Ram Avtar Pal's *Shambook Vadh*.
8. Discuss the significance of Dalit heroines such as Jhalkaribai to the construction of an alternative Dalit history.
9. How have Dalit short stories highlighted the ambivalences and tensions experienced by Dalits entering the urban middle class?
10. On what basis does the Dalit writer Kancha Ilaiah argue that Dalits are not Hindu?
11. Why does S. Anand claim Dalit literature has become a consumer product? What does this imply for the future of Dalit literary assertion?
12. What is the debate around the concept of the 'Dalit woman's voice'? Does it exist, and if so, how does it differ from the voice of the Dalit male author?
13. How does Dalit literature complicate the debate on reservations? Use examples from Dalit literary texts.

14. Discuss the evolving relationship between the Dalit movement and the Hindu Right.
15. How have Dalit writers constructed a specifically 'Dalit' literary aesthetic, and how have they employed this new aesthetic standard?
16. 'Dalit writers have brought casteism into the literary world.' Analyse this statement in light of recent debates in Hindi.
17. Should that portion of Premchand's fiction which includes low-caste characters be considered 'Dalit literature'?

**END OF PAPER**