

**ST. JOSEPH’S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE- 27**

**II MA ENGLISH – IV SEMESTER**

**END SEMESTER EXAMINATION DECEMBER 2022**

**ENDE: 7418 ELECTIVE: WORLD LITERATURES-I**

**Time: 1 ½ hours**  **Max. Marks: 50**

**This question paper contains 3 sections and 3 printed pages.**

**SECTION-A**

1. **Read the following excerpt from an article about Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina* from The Guardian:**

It is more admired than learned from. Anna Karenina couldn't be less like a conventional modern novel. Instead of a barrage of metaphors describing things in terms of other things that they resemble, Lev Tolstoy seeks the precise word for the thing itself. Instead of the solipsistic modern mode of events being experienced from the point of view of a single character, Tolstoy slips in and out of the consciousness of dozens of characters, major and minor. At one point he tells us what a character's dog is thinking.

Tolstoy doesn't believe in "show, don't tell". He likes to show and tell. The teller, the narrator of the book, is a formless, omniscient voice with no elaborate Rothian construct to justify his role. No first-person or free-indirect speech here. Even while we're in a character's head, it's the narrator who recounts the character's experiences through liberal use of such unfashionable phrases as "she thought", "he felt" and "it seemed to him that".

Tolstoy creates a space for the narrator's independence – the narrator is close enough to the characters to rely on them for his existence, but free enough to pass unchallenged judgment on their actions, and to tell us things about them that they don't know about themselves. The most powerful passages are those where Tolstoy slows time down to note each thought, gesture and feeling of Anna and her lover Vronsky, with a third entity present – the narrator – not only lodged deep in the two psyches, but standing back to tell us the ways in which one is misunderstanding the other. (James Meek, 31 August, 2012)

**IA Answer the following questions in about five sentences each (2x5=10)**

1. What does the author mean when he says Anna Karenina “is more admired than learned from”? Explain briefly
2. What does the writer mean when he says that Tolstoy “likes to show and tell” Explain briefly

**SECTION-B**

**IIA Answer TWO of the following questions in 200 words each (2x15=30)**

1. Explore in detail Szymborska’s poetry and point out to some of its salient aspects. Is she different from other poets you have read? Give reasons for your answer.
2. Some say that Milan Kundera’s *The Joke* is a tale of love, desire and hate. Others say it is a narrative of pain, exile and loss. Which of the two perspectives do you agree with? Or do you have a third perspective? Argue your point of view suitably
3. Identify and highlight two profound insights you have gained from your reading of Montaigne’s essay. Comment on their significance to French society, culture and the people in Montaigne’s time

**SECTION-C**

**III.Read the following carefully**

Kafka worked on Metamorphosis through the autumn of 1912 and completed a version on 7 December that year. But negotiations with publishers were complicated, and circumstances – the first world war, among other things – intervened… why does *Metamorphosis* still attract readers? One reason is that it’s a horror story of sorts. Its premise – a man awakens in the body of an insect – exerts a ghastly fascination beyond anything in even the consummate short works of Chekhov or Joyce or [Alice Munro](https://www.theguardian.com/books/alice-munro).

**…** Another is that it is, amid its pathos, awfully funny. Gregor Samsa wakes to discover he has six legs and a shell, yet for some pages he thinks that what ails him might just be the kind of throat complaint that is “the occupational malady of travellers”. What can you do but laugh?

**…** And there’s more. As Gregor struggles to crawl off his bed, a clerk from his company calls at the Samsa apartment. As [Vladimir Nabokov](https://www.theguardian.com/books/vladimirnabokov) commented: “This grim speed in checking a remiss employee has all the qualities of a bad dream.” But it is also farce: a personal embarrassment raised to a debacle by multiple easily shocked persons arriving on the scene to witness it.

**…***Metamorphosis* exemplifies the world Kafka invented on paper – recognisable but not quite real, precisely detailed and yet dreamlike.

… We call this world “Kafkaesque”, of course, while keeping mindful of [Italo Calvino](https://www.theguardian.com/books/italocalvino)’s lament that one hears that term “every quarter of an hour, applied indiscriminately”

…I’ll venture we mean “Kafkaesque” to denote a sense of suddenly inhabiting a world in which one’s customary habits of thought and behaviour are confounded and made hopeless.

**…** To dig a little deeper, the term evokes an individual’s sense of finding himself victimised by large impersonal forces, feeling after a while that he can’t but take it personally – and feeling haunted, too, by the sense that maybe, after all, he deserves it.

**…**If you grant the preceding, then Metamorphosis is perhaps the quintessential Kafka story.

(Richard T Kelly, The Guardian, 18th July 2o14)

**III.A Answer the following question based on the above excerpt in 150 words**

**(1x10=10)**

1. What are the salient features of Kafka’s writing that make his novel “Kafkaesque”? Comment on the significance of this perspective