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Register Number:

DATE: 28-06-2019

**St. Joseph’s College (Autonomous)**

**Special Supplementary Examination- June 2019**

**VI Semester EJP- Optional English**

**OE- 6315 South Asian Studies**

**Time allotted: 2.5 hrs Marks: 70**

Instructions:

1. You are allowed to use a dictionary.

2. This Question paper has THREE sections & Two printed sheets.

3. You will lose marks for exceeding the word limit.

**Section A**

**Read the following extract from Vinay Lal’s blog post on the “Indian Diaspora” and Answer the questions set on it**

**THE INDIAN DIASPORA**

The Indian diaspora today constitutes an important, and in some respects unique, force in world culture. The origins of the modern Indian diaspora lie mainly in the subjugation of India by the British and its incorporation into the British empire. Indians were taken over as indentured labor to far-flung parts of the empire in the nineteenth-century, a circumstance to which the modern Indian populations of Fiji, Mauritius, Guyana, Trinidad, Surinam, Malaysia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and other places attest in their own peculiar ways. Over two million Indian men fought on behalf of the empire in numerous wars, including the Boer War and the two World Wars, and some remained behind to claim the land on which they had fought as their own. As if in emulation of their ancestors, many Gujarati traders once again left for East Africa in large numbers in the early part of the twentieth century. Finally, in the post-World War II period, the dispersal of Indian labor and professionals has been a nearly world-wide phenomenon. Indians, and other South Asians, provided the labor that helped in the reconstruction of war-torn Europe, particularly the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, and in more recent years unskilled labor from South Asia has been the main force in the transformation of the physical landscape of much of the Middle East. Meanwhile, in countries such as the United States, Canada, and Australia, Indians have made their presence visibly felt in the professions.

Who and what is an Indian? How we are to characterize the Indian diasporic community as 'Indian' given that it is constituted of such diverse elements as South Asian Hong Kong Muslims, Canadian Sikhs (or shall we say Sikh Canadians?), Punjabi Mexican Californians, Gujarati East Africans now settled in the U.S. by way of England, South African Hindus, and so forth? In the United States, at least, the Indian community has occupied a place of considerable privilege, and many Indians could deflect the moment of recognition that 'Indianness' and being 'American' do not always happily coincide. In recent years, with a declining economy on the one hand, and the congregation of Indians in clusters that visibly put them apart on the other hand, Indians have for the first time become the targets of racial attacks. The Indian woman in her 'native dress', with the vermillion dot on her forehead, is easily seen as an embodiment of sheer otherness, and so she has been perceived by the so-called "dot-busters", a gang of white teenagers operating in New Jersey who have already been responsible for several violent crimes against Indians. In North America and the U.K., the native Indian costume has come up for public scrutiny and discussion in an altogether different respect: Sikhs have insisted that they be exempt from the law that compels bicyclists and motorcyclists to wear helmets, for such helmets cannot be worn over turbans, and their religious faith requires Sikhs to wear turbans. The kirpan has been an issue of contention in California schools. The 'corner shop', a hallowed symbol (if we could recall our Dickens) of English life, is now mainly in the hands of Indians. The obvious question is not only, 'What do the English think of that', but also: 'If the English landscape has been so altered, what is English about England'? The diaspora, in short, affects the center as well.

However unlike Indian communities across the world might be, they all maintain some sort of tenuous link with the motherland. The most likely candidate for a force of bonding would be, of all things, the Hindi feature film, a phenomenon unique to the Indian diaspora: what Hollywood is to Western Europe, the Bombay Hollywood ("Bollywood") is to the Middle East and East Africa. The modesty, not to mention puritanism, of the Hindi film is said to explain its appeal to the Islamic world; and though we may well contest that interpretation, it is worthy of note that Hindi films found in grocery and video stores across the U.S. often carry subtitles in Arabic, one language which is indubitably not spoken by any Indian community in the U.S.! The Indian 'arranged marriage' might furnish another such facet of a 'common culture'. Newspapers published by Indian communities flourish everywhere, and they invariably carry a section with matrimonial ads. Though these very ads help Indians to 'locate' one another, they pose difficult questions about 'otherness', both the otherness' of Indians in relation to 'Americans', and the internal 'otherness' of certain Indians in relation to other Indians…

**Answer the following in about 200 words (2x15=30)**

1. Trace the varied historical circumstances that cause the birth of the so-called ‘Indian diaspora’ and comment on its so-called ‘otherness’ in a foreign land
2. Describe in detail the idea of “Indianness” that Indians abroad carry as an integral character of their identity. Comment also on why there is such a ‘tenuous’, often uncertain relationship with the ‘motherland’, despite the serious emphasis on an “Indian” identity.

**Section B**

**Answer any two of the following in about 200 words (2x 15=30)**

1. Explain and Comment on how ‘language’ produces and shapes ‘culture’. Show also how the language into culture process involves notions of ‘nationality’. Using the language movements, you have read about in your course, substantiate your perceptions.
2. Explain and comment on the conditions Norwan, the Afghan woman-poet, describes and interprets in her poetry. What peculiar aspects of the status of women are revealed through her poems? Provide suitable illustrations to substantiate your perceptions
3. Using any two feature films you viewed as part of the course, discuss the varied manifestations of the South Asian diasporic experience.

**Section C**

**Write short notes on any ONE of the following in about 100 words each (1x10= 10)**

6) Insights provided by the documentaries on South Asia

7) Ethnic identities and the risk of conflict in South Asia