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Registration number:

**ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE-27**  
**III semester**

**SEMESTER EXAMINATION: OCTOBER 2021**  
(Examination conducted in March 2022)  
**TS 320: THEATRE & PERFORMANCE STUDIES**

**Time: 2 ½ Hours**

**Max. Marks: 70**

**Instructions:**

- 1. This paper is for the III TEP students of Theatre and Performance Studies**
- 2. This paper has THREE printed pages and FOUR sections.**
- 3. Please stick to the suggested word limit.**

**A. Read the following extract from Dario Fo's memoir and answer the questions that follow.**

After several months, Uncle Beniamino, the youngest of my mother's brothers, was given the job of taking me home. As I was leaving, Granddad lifted me onto the back of that great horse, Gargantua's stallion. 'We'll let him take you to the station!' I took hold of the reins, but made no effort to manoeuvre with them. I had long since discovered that there was no point in pulling the reins up and down since the horse made up its own mind about where it was supposed to turn. For years, it had been padding at least three times a week along the same roads that led to the farms and villages where my granddad dispensed his chatter and wares. They had put one over me, but I refused to give them the satisfaction of knowing that I knew, and so I carried on unperturbed, mimicking the various actions of driving the cart. Moreover, the horse responded to variations in routine only when its master gave orders with a shout or a jerk of the bridle. That was why on this occasion Granddad got up on the horse's back beside me: our destination was the station, which was not part of the horse's usual round.

Kisses, hugs, a lump in the throat and a few tears ... shaking hands ... the train moving off. I remained glued to the window the whole time we travelled through Lomellina, and I thought back to the day of my arrival in Sartirana, to the aversion I had felt towards that countryside infested by mosquitoes and midges, lined with rows of poplar trees marking the boundaries of rice fields and cut into an infinity of labyrinthine patterns by the vertical and horizontal spider's web of canals and waterways. Now those complex geometries had entered my brain like expressions of some surreal, metaphysical calm. The guard on the train was surprised to see me riding alone in the carriage: it was not normal, especially in those days, for a child to travel on his own without a guardian, but I was used to it. Trains, railway tracks, stations were all as natural to me as breathing, drinking and going to the toilet.

On my arrival in Oleggio, all I had to do was look around and there, near the engine, red hat pulled down over his head, was my father. He came towards me, picked me up with one arm, gave me a hug, held me close to his face, whistled to the engine driver to give him the sign to move off and then announced with a big smile: 'There's a big surprise waiting for you

at home! You've got a little sister ... Bianca! You'll not believe how pretty she is, like a porcelain doll!

She was indeed just like a porcelain doll, my little sister ... so delicate in her features, with those big, shining eyes. They let me hold her in my arms for a little, but I had to give up almost immediately because she wriggled like a baby goat and burst into a terrible wail. Everybody gathered round her: relatives, friends, as well as the three schoolteacher sisters who lived on the landing. No one paid any heed to me or to my brother Fulvio. They seemed to be aware of our presence only when they tripped over us, so we decided to keep ourselves to ourselves. We played in the courtyard and in the wasteland among the trees in the park on the other side of the road. There they were putting up a circus tent. Incapable of minding our own business, we set out to get on good terms with the workers erecting large poles and stretching out the ropes which would support the Big Top. They soon found work for us: we were dispatched with the owner's son to stick up posters on the walls and lampposts all along the main streets.

In this way we won the right to get in free for the evening performances. We did ask our mother for permission but she was so busy with the new baby that she scarcely put up any resistance. We were first in the queue outside the Big Top, two hours before the opening. The attendant in charge of the wild animals took us over to see the cages. A good ten metres away from the animal compound, we were overcome by an odour that nearly made us throw up – the stench of the lions.

What a disappointment! An animal of such majesty, the symbol of might and courage giving off such a rancid stink. How can an emperor raise as his standard the image of that foul shitter? 'To be consistent, it really should bring its smell along with it everywhere it goes...' I said to the attendant. 'This is what happens to them when they are locked up ... animals in captivity, forced to live in a cage, that's what makes them smell like that. Normally, freedom has no stench. When they are at liberty in the forests, they certainly do not pong that way. They smell the way they should, just enough to let themselves be recognised by their own kind and feared by their prey.'

That first encounter with the circus was overwhelming for both of us: lions prancing about and roaring so loudly that they made your insides churn up, elephants on parade, sometimes with movements of such lightness that they seemed filled with warm air, like giant balloons. But the act which left us breathless every time was undoubtedly the acrobats' turn. Two girls starting off from their position up there on the trapeze, swinging backwards and forwards, leaving traces of evanescent light as they go. My God, what was that? A somersault ... a girl upside down, with no grip, hands waving in the void ... she's going to fall ... no ... a miracle! I have no idea how, but she remains hanging by her feet from the bar of the trapeze. Now, she swings across the whole arch of the Big Top, swallowed up by the spotlights' back-lighting, and then comes back into view, slender and sinuous. From nowhere, another girl appears walking on a tightrope which crosses the dome. She dances in mid-air, pirouetting and twirling.

Beneath, in the centre of the arena, a clown lets out shrill screams of fear at each turn, but now he is enchanted by the grace of the girl on the tightrope and wants to join her up there. He produces a long ladder and, without supporting it on the wire, climbs swiftly up. The rungs come away one after the other, but the clown continues relentlessly, clinging on by the sheer strength of his arms. There he is. He has reached the tightrope with one leap he is there, on his feet, keeping his balance as he strolls along with his hands in his pockets. The girl tells him off and orders him to go away, and all of a sudden the clown realises he is suspended in mid-air and is overcome by panic. He wobbles, topples over ... tumbles ... grabs a hold of the girl's feet ... an incredible sway to one side and there he is, upright once again, tenderly embracing his beautiful tightrope walker. He kisses her. Rapturous applause.

**1.A. Answer ANY THREE of the following questions in 100-150 words each.  
(3x10=30)**

1. What differences in his approach to storytelling do you find between this passage and 'Accidental death of an Anarchist'? Beyond the technical differences of play and memoir, what other things do you notice?
2. Comment on the way Dario Fo uses satire to arouse both laughter and reflection towards the end of this passage.
3. Is laughter a form of protest? How is this used in Fo's work? Do you see similar tendencies reflected in this passage?
4. Examine the phrase 'freedom has no stench' and explain how you understand it in a regional, familiar context.

**I.B. 5. Select one scene from the passage above to be adapted and performed on stage for an audience largely comprising of college students. What props would you use? Examine the many animal scenes, how would you rewrite them for stage?  
Answer in 200 words. (15 marks)**

**C. Read the excerpt given below and answer the question that follows with reference to context. (15 marks)**

'Whether they want it or not, I shall impose truth and justice. I shall do what I can to make sure that these scandals explode in the most public way possible; and you need not fear that, in among the rot, the power of government will be undermined. Let the scandal come, because on the basis of that scandal a more durable power of the state will be founded!

6. Identify the speaker. Whose words is he borrowing? What is the 'more durable power of the state' in your understanding? Is the speaker assuming an integrity that is above questioning? **Answer in about ten sentences.**

**D. Write about a classmate's online presence or online curation of themselves that you are intrigued by. Explain what you find memorable about how they conduct themselves in an online class and why.  
Answer in 100-150 words. (10 marks)**

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