

MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY, KOTTAYAM

Fifth Semester MGU-UGP (Honours) Regular Examination, August 2026

Discipline Specific Course – MG5DSEENGA00

Conflict zone Literatures: Memory, Identity, and Resistance.

(2024 Admission Onwards)

Model Question Paper

Duration: 2 Hours

Maximum Marks: 70

Students should attempt at least one question from each course outcome to enhance their overall outcome attainability.

Part A

Multiple Choice Questions

Answer all questions. Each question carries 1 mark.

1. In Refaat Alareer's poem "If I Must Die," what object does the speaker ask to be crafted from his clothes to bring hope to a child? [R] [2]

- a) A canvas for a painting
- b) A white kite
- c) A fishing net
- d) A traditional flag

2. What is the primary psychological struggle the narrator, Sergeant Price, faces upon returning home to the United States? [U] [2]

- a) Severe physical injuries that prevent him from working.
- b) Disconnecting from his civilian life and struggling to adjust to a peaceful environment.
- c) Legal trouble resulting from actions taken during his deployment.
- d) Financial ruin due to a lack of military benefits

3. The title "Telemachus" directly references Homer's *Odyssey*. In the context of Vuong's poem, what does this allusion primarily represent? [U] [3]

- a) The literal geographic journey through ancient Greece
- b) The archetype of a son endlessly searching for a legendary, absent father
- c) The celebration of military victory and imperial conquest
- d) The rejection of family heritage in favour of self-reinvention

4. What is the primary narrative format of *Sea Prayer*? [U] [3]

- a) A legal brief advocating for the rights of maritime refugees
 - b) A letter from a father to his son as they wait on a beach to board a dangerous boat
- [1]

- c) A dialogue between two humanitarian workers on a rescue vessel
 - d) A collection of short newspaper dispatches from a war zone
5. What paranormal event forms the core speculative element of Bowes's story? [R] [3]
- a) A physical tear in spacetime causing ghosts from multiple eras to wander the streets
 - b) A series of prophetic dreams warning New Yorkers of future events
 - c) A mysterious sickness causing civilians to forget the tragic events
 - d) The sudden resurrection of everyone who died south of Houston Street
6. In Ilya Kaminsky's poem "We Lived Happily During the War," what central irony does the speaker explore regarding their lifestyle during a time of global conflict? [A] [4]
- a) They were forced to enlist in the military against their will.
 - b) They enjoyed comfort, safety, and a normal life while their country's military waged war abroad.
 - c) They actively protested in the streets while secretly supporting the war effort.
 - d) They lost all of their material wealth but found spiritual enlightenment
7. What central real-life event and figure inspired Imtiaz Dharker to write "A Century Later"? [R] [4]
- a) The historic suffragette protests.
 - a) The assassination attempt on Malala Yousafzai
 - b) The establishment of the first women's university in India.
 - c) A fictional account of a young girl who migrates to Germany.
8. Who defines war as a paradoxical trinity composed of primordial violence, hatred, and enmity? [R] [1]
- a) Carl von Clausewitz
 - b) Sun Tzu
 - c) Martin van Creveld
 - d) Mary Kaldor
9. Who wrote the poem "'Home' "? [R] [4]
- a) Phil Klay
 - b) Ocean Vuong
 - c) Warsan Shire
 - d) Imtiaz Dharker
10. What mundane, domestic activities does the speaker highlight to illustrate the exhausting physical reality of post-war recovery? [R] [4]
- a) Rebuilding castles and marching in victory parades
 - b) Shoving rubble to the sides of the road and glazing windows
 - c) Counting casualties and organizing mass trials
 - d) Planting formal gardens and designing monuments

(10 × 1 = 10 Marks)

Part B

Short Essay Questions

Answer any six questions in about 100 words.

Each question carries 5 marks.

11. In the lines "*to sell my things / to buy a piece of cloth / and some strings*", what does the act of selling personal belongings imply about the speaker's priorities in the poem "If I Must Die"? [R] [2]
12. What does the narrator's hyper-vigilance at the American grocery store reveal about his psychological state upon returning home in the short story "Redeployment"? [U] [2]
13. How does Achille Mbembe define a "death world," and what is its primary characteristic in his theory of necropolitics? [R] [2]
14. How does literature challenge state metanarratives, according to Debamitra Kar? [U] [1]
15. "The face not mine — but one I will wear", what does these lines reveal about the son's identity in Ocean Vuong's poem? [A] [3]
16. How does the author use the character of Mags to challenge the narrator's desire to simply "return to routine" after the disaster? [A] [3]
17. Analyse the significance of Kaminsky's characterization of the nation as "*the country of money*." [A] [4]
18. How does Warsan Shire use imagery to depict the experience of displacement? [R] [3]
19. Explain the significance of the title "A Century Later." What historical parallel is the poem drawing? [R] [3]

(6 × 5 = 30 Marks)

Part C

Essay Questions

Answer any two in 300 words each.

20. Literature of the conflict zone attempts to give voice to the multitude, who are always kept in the periphery or the border region. Explain [R] [1]
21. Evaluate how Dharker's "A Century Later" argues that a book can be a more destabilizing weapon than a gun. [E] [4]
22. Writers often turn to myth, folklore, or allegory when literal language fails to capture the scale of geopolitical displacement. Explain [A] [3]
23. Examine how "The Redeployment" brings out the effect of trauma upon the soldier in the aftermath of war. [U] [3]

(2 × 15 = 30 Marks)