

TYPICAL CORRECTION OF FIRST SEMESTER EXAM (2020/2021)

Level: Master II

Module: Literary Criticism

Teacher: Dida Nassireddine

Date: 04/03/2021

Time: 11.10 am – 12.10 am

Duration: 1h

1) Highlight the main principles of Marxist literary criticism: (07 pts.)

Students are expected to provide the following information in a well-written paragraph:

- ✓ The rejection of “identity”, individualism, and independence.
- ✓ Literature is the product of ideology, class struggles, and economic substructure.
- ✓ Truth is institutionally created (no “objectivity”).
- ✓ Language is not a self-sufficient system but a social practice.
- ✓ Art is simply a commodity (production).
- ✓ Literature helps stage revolution (ideology).
- ✓ Art and ideas are the integral components of history.
- ✓ “Art for art’s sake” is illusive; “utilitarianism” is the real function of art.
- ✓ Literature should conform to an official party.
- ✓ Social realism is against bourgeois realism (naturalism). Social realism views reality from the point of view of the Proletariat.

2) Simon De Beauvoir concludes that **“one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman”**. In the light of Feminist criticism, address the basic arguments that support De Beauvoir’s conclusion. Cite examples when possible. **(13 pts.)**

Students are expected to mention the following in a well-written paragraph:

Students must begin with the assumption that gender is a cultural construct, i.e. one’s masculinity and femininity is dictated and controlled by society and history. It is obvious that parents also play a central role in the formation of their children’s gender identity and difference through rules and imitation. Students are also invited to refer to some famous sayings that truly prove that all gender differences are simply rooted in fallacious historical statements such as Aristotle’s, the “female is a female by virtue of a certain lack of qualities”. Regarding the basic arguments in favour of De Beauvoir’s conclusion, students must raise some basic concepts of feminism :

- ✓ Phallogocentrism.
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- ✓ Patriarchy as a political system.
- ✓ The evolution of the concept of gender in feminist criticism (Virginia Woolf, Kate Millet, Elaine Showalter, etc.)
- ✓ A brief illustration of the relationship between gender and history using some examples from works of fiction.

Comprehensiveness, organisation, and relevance will all be considered.