

HUL340: Major Exam

21st November, 3:30-5:30pm

Maximum Marks: 30

1. Identify the texts in which these passages appear. Explain the significance of the passage, and place it in the larger context of the text it has been excerpted from.
(4*4=16 marks)
 - i) The only thing that you have to do is to look at your life with the right zoom setting, like on a digital camera. When you use the right setting, when you zoom out, it is very easy to see which choice is right. The problem is [...] that people are so stuck in the present trying their level best to make sure that the present time is easy to live through, that they make wrong choices that will only bring bigger difficulties in the future.
 - ii) On the third day the elderly man asked the wrinkled man if he would care to join him on his balcony, and though the elderly man could not speak Brazilian Portuguese and the wrinkled man could not speak Dutch, they cobbled together a conversation, a conversation with many long gaps, but these gaps were eminently comfortable, almost unnoticed by the two men, as two ancient trees would not notice a few minutes or hours that passed without a breeze.
 - iii) It was useless. He couldn't read. He couldn't do anything. The wailing of the child pierced the drum of his ear. It was useless, useless! He was a prisoner for life. His arms trembled with anger and suddenly bending to the child's face he shouted: "Stop!"
 - iv) The dead man lying face up in the street next to the back door of the car, mouth open, pants coming undone and shirt unbuttoned, chest riddled with bullet holes from the police, is none other than Ramnivas – the criminal who, to this day, remains unidentified. And he will never be identified, since no one would recognize him any longer.
2. Read the two paragraphs below. They have been extracted from two different articles, and seem to be arguing from standpoints that are the opposite of each other. Would it be possible, in your opinion, to reconcile the two viewpoints being expressed here? How?

(4 marks)

- i) Just when we were about to get into the car, along came a group of aravanis (hijras). [...] But then again, they of all people know that there isn't one kind of body in the world. While life is difficult with one functional leg, it is difficult not by default but it is made difficult by all the circumstances around us. If not for all of this, this would be another kind of body. Not simple by any stretch but at least not inconvenient, because in the ideal world different would be good and access to public space and access to life and world would really be for ALL. Wishful thinking!
- ii) The best cities are ironically built on undemocratic ideals. Even when innovating and providing opportunity, they enforce severe restrictions on daily life. London would not have some of the world's most natural urban parks without ordinances controlling the building around them, and the imposition of a congestion tax that restricts polluting cars from entering the centre of town. Along the East Coast of the U.S., many small towns are designated for pedestrians only. Such restrictions have been designed for the larger common good, and clearly state preferences for better public health, green space, and enriching the experience of surrounding heritage.

3. With detailed reference to the two films that were screened for the course, comment on how the ambitions and anxieties of the two protagonists are shaped by the city they live in.



(5 marks)

4. Would you agree with the statement that *Exit West* is a city-novel, in which the city – real and imagined, dystopic and utopic – becomes the locus both of a humanitarian crisis, as well as its resolution? Discuss.

(5 marks)