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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

9695/73

Paper 7 Comment and Appreciation

May/June 2016

2 hours

No Additional Materials are required.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

An answer booklet is provided inside this question paper. You should follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

Answer **two** questions.

You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

This document consists of **5** printed pages, **3** blank pages and **1** insert.

2

1 Write a critical commentary on the following poem by Andrew Salkey (published in 1979).*Inside*

Time and again,
she had been carelessly used,
hurt, pulped
and spat out by her friends.

She put the pain of the years
in her cupped hands,
and looked at it hard
and tried to squeeze it
tight and dry: but she failed.

5

The anguish bunched.
It burst through the slits
of her fingers
and stung her eyes,
just as the pinched rind
often did
in her mother's kitchen.

10

She sits, now,
her hands smelling of limes,
and tries to work out
what went wrong
with all those early
close relationships, how things got more
and more twisted and snarled,
what caused the dislocation
and the drift,
what made her so rootedly trusting;
and she knows
that she is not alone to blame.

20

25

A certain pinking process,¹
set in motion, long ago,
had done the trick,
had turned the earth,
and geared the growth.

30

Lime trees still grow
in her mother's garden,
next to the kitchen
and the pain simply won't subside.

35

¹ *pinking process*: making of holes

3

2 Write a critical commentary on the following poem by Kamala Das (published in 1965).

Hot Noon in Malabar

This is a noon for beggars with whining
Voices, a noon for men who come from hills
With parrots in a cage and fortune-cards,
All stained with time, for brown Kurava girls¹
With old eyes, who read palm in light singsong 5
Voices, for bangle-sellers who spread
On the cool black floor those red and green and blue
Bangles, all covered with the dust of roads,
Miles, grow cracks on the heels, so that when they
Clambered up our porch, the noise was grating, 10
Strange..... This is a noon for strangers who part
The window-drapes and peer in, their hot eyes
Brimming with the sun, not seeing a thing in
Shadowy rooms and turn away and look
So yearningly at the brick-ledged well. This 15
Is a noon for strangers with mistrust in
Their eyes, dark, silent ones who rarely speak
At all, so that when they speak, their voices
Run wild, like jungle-voices. Yes, this is
A noon for wild men, wild thoughts, wild love. To 20
Be here, far away, is torture. Wild feet
Stirring up the dust, this hot noon, at my
Home in Malabar, and I so far away.....

¹ *Kurava girls*: young women whose marriage is to be arranged

3 Write a critical commentary on the following extract from the novel *Mary* (1788) by Mary Wollstonecraft.

Mary's life is very hard and difficult, she deeply misses Henry, the man she loves.

Unhappy, she wandered about the village, and relieved the poor; it was the only employment that eased her aching heart; she became more intimate with misery – the misery that rises from poverty and the lack of education.

One evening a man who stood weeping in a little lane, near the house she resided in, caught her eye. She approached him; in a confused manner, he informed her, that his wife was dying, and his children crying for the bread he could not earn. Mary desired to be conducted to his habitation; it was not very distant, and was the upper room in an old mansion-house, which had once been full of richness and luxury. Some tattered shreds of rich hangings still remained, covered with cobwebs and filth; round the ceiling, through which the rain dropped, was some beautiful old decoration; and a spacious gallery was rendered dark by the broken windows being blocked up; through the apertures the wind forced its way in hollow sounds, and reverberated along the former scene of festivity.

It was crowded with inhabitants: some were scolding, others swearing, or singing indecent songs. What a sight for Mary! Her blood ran cold; yet she had sufficient resolution to mount to the top of the house. On the floor, in one corner of a very small room, lay a dreadfully thin figure of a woman; a window over her head scarcely admitted any light, for the broken panes were stuffed with dirty rags. Near her were five children, all young, and covered with dirt; their sallow cheeks, and weary eyes, exhibited none of the charms of childhood. Some were fighting, and others crying for food; their yells were mixed with their mother's groans, and the wind which rushed through the passage. Mary was petrified; but soon assuming more courage, approached the bed, and, regardless of the surrounding nastiness, knelt down by the poor wretch, and breathed the most poisonous air; for the unfortunate creature was dying of a terrible fever, the consequence of dirt and want.

Their state did not require much explanation. Mary sent the husband for a poor neighbour, whom she hired to nurse the woman, and take care of the children; and then went herself to buy them some necessaries at a shop not far distant. Her knowledge of medicine had enabled her to prescribe for the woman; and she left the house, with a mixture of horror and satisfaction.

She visited them every day, and procured them every comfort; contrary to her expectation, the woman began to recover; cleanliness and wholesome food had a wonderful effect; and Mary saw her rising as it were from the grave. Not aware of the danger she ran into, she did not think of it till she perceived she had caught the fever. It made such an alarming progress, that she was prevailed on to send for a physician; but the disorder was so violent, that for some days it baffled his skill; and Mary felt not her danger, as she was delirious. After the crisis, the symptoms were more favourable, and she slowly recovered, without regaining much strength or spirits; indeed they were intolerably low: she wanted a tender nurse.

For some time she had observed, that she was not treated with the same respect as formerly; her favours were forgotten when no more were expected. This ingratitude hurt her, as did a similar instance in the woman who came out of the ship. Mary had hitherto supported her; as her finances were growing low, she hinted to her, that she ought to try to earn her own livelihood: the woman in return loaded her with abuse.

Two months slowly passed; she had not seen, or heard from Henry. He was sick – nay perhaps had forgotten her; all the world was dreary, and all the people ungrateful.

She sunk into a depression, and endeavouring to rouse herself out of it, she wrote in her book another fragment:

5

“Surely life is a dream, a frightful one! and after those rude, disjointed images are fled, will light ever break in? Shall I ever feel joy? Do all suffer like me; or am I framed so as to be particularly susceptible of misery?”

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