

Wednesday 25 May 2022: 12pm

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Thursday 26 May 2022: 12pm

Part II Paper 13

POSTCOLONIAL AND RELATED LITERATURES

Answer **Section A** and **two** questions from **Section B**.

At least one of your answers in Section B must include substantial discussion of **two or more** authors.

In questions where a quotation is attributed to an author or country, candidates are not obliged to refer to that author or country in their answer unless specifically required to do so.

*Do **not** present the same material twice, **either** in this paper **or** in the examination as a whole.*

Irrelevant answers, or answers only tenuously related to the question, will be penalized.

In the case of handwritten scripts, illegible handwriting may place candidates at a disadvantage.

*Include your **number**, not your name, on submitted scripts.*

There will be a word-count range of 800-1200 per essay, which is intended to approximate to the amount that can be written by hand under normal examination conditions. For papers which include a 'Section A' made up of multiple parts, the word-count for a candidate's responses to Section A as a whole must be within the range of 800–1200 words.

Examination responses should conform to the following presentation requirements: they should be in minimum 12pt type; should use a sans serif typeface (eg Arial or Calibri); should be 1.5 or double-spaced; and should be submitted as a word-processed document (in .docx or .rtf format).

SECTION A

In the form of a single answer, comment in detail on **any two** of the following passages or complete poems, engaging with critical issues in the field as you do so. You may bring in other relevant texts for comparison.

(a)

Then she asked shyly, her eyes lowered: "Have you met the roving spirits?"

"Roving spirits?"

"Men and women, from the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Amman, even as far as Kuwait. They cross the bridge, then they walk through our alleys without saying anything, staring up at the balconies and windows. Some of them knock on doors and ask, politely, if they can come in, look around and have a drink of water. Then they go away without a word. The places they asked to go into were their homes. 5

"Some of the people living in the houses greet them with a sympathetic smile, but with others the smile's a wry one. Some people let them come inside the house, while others simply won't open the door. 10

"Then there are those who don't knock on doors, but keep looking around for a passerby with a dark complexion.* When they find one, they stop him and ask him whether there used to be house made of dark-rimmed stone standing on that particular spot. Sometimes the passerby will stop to try and remember then start reminiscing; sometimes he'll say: "I was born after the disaster, Uncle." 15

"These roving spirits don't come to my house. They haven't heard about my treasures.
Why haven't you written something about my treasures in your newspaper?

"Go on, write something! Write about the treasures from the inside of my sofas. I've got whole bundles of young people's treasures here: first love letters, poems hidden by boys in the pages of school textbooks, bracelets, earrings, bangles, chains with gold heart-shaped pendants that you open to find two pictures inside, his and hers. I've got diaries in shy, delicate handwriting and others in broad, confident hands. They're full of questions: What does he want from me? And full of binding oaths for the homeland." 20 25

EMILE HABIBY, translated from Hebrew by Roger Allen and Christopher Tingley, 'The Odds-and- Ends Woman' (1968)

* An Arab, as contrasted to the numerous Ashkenazi Jews living in the area.

(b)

And all of the ghosts are burning
above the city. Some fires burn
pink as damaged blossom.
Those broken vessels, bruised, lit
and upward streaking, rose-hot capillaries 5
ignite the dead's ragged cloth and unshrooms
them to gas. Screaming crackle. Frayed spirit,
unbecoming black we think makes up the unseen,
but that black is the last twisted shape
their bodies will take. The floor, the rooms, 10
liquid windows part absence, part gas.
And then the wind breathes sideways:
Their soot is scattered, ghosts of the now-gone
dragged out of hereafter back to tonight,
back to the cold air making its way towards 15
a darker past, the true past, there at spirit level.

JAY BERNARD, 'Chemical' (2019)

(c)

Tell me if ah seeing right
Take a look down de street

Words dancin
words dancin
till dey sweat 5
words like fishes
jumpin out a net
words wild and free
joining de poetry revelry
words back to back 10
words belly to belly

Come on everybody
come and join de poetry band
dis is poetry carnival
dis is poetry bacchanal* 15
when inspiration call
take yu pen in yu hand
if yu dont have a pen

take yu pencil in yu hand
if yu dont have a pencil 20
what the hell
so long de feeling start to swell
just shout de poem out

Words jumpin off de page
tell me if Ah seeing right 25
words like birds
jumpin out a cage
take a look down de street
words shakin dey waist
words shakin dey bum 30
words wit black skin
words wit white skin
words wit brown skin
words wit no skin at all
words huggin up words 35
an saying I want to be a poem today
rhyme or no rhyme
I is a poem today
I mean to have a good time

Words feelin hot hot hot 40
big words feelin hot hot hot
lil words feelin hot hot hot
even sad words cant help
tappin dey toe
to de riddum of de poetry band 45

Dis is poetry carnival
dis is poetry bacchanal*
so come on everybody
join de celebration
all yu need is plenty perspiration 50
an a little inspiration
plenty perspiration
an a little inspiration

JOHN AGARD, 'Poetry Jump-Up'* (1996 [1990])

*Drunken and joyous festival; named after Bacchus, the Greek God of wine.

*In Caribbean dialect, a party.

(d)

So Uma went home with Papa. By doing the same journey on a day train, it was as if the entire process was being reversed. The compartment was crowded this time with strangers, but Papa had so lost control of himself, was so beside himself, as not to behave normally or sanely: he beat his head with his fists, and moaned aloud about the dowry and the wedding expenses while everyone, all of them strangers – women with babies and baskets of food, men reading papers or playing cards or discussing business – turned to listen with the keenest of interest, throwing significant looks at Uma who kept her head wrapped up in her sari in an effort to screen her shame. By the time they reached their own station, everyone along the way knew of her humiliation and her ruin. It was fortunate that none of them were the lawyers and magistrates Papa ordinarily met: he would not have cared so to lose control of himself and betray his gullibility before them. It was necessary to get himself under control by the time he returned to his own circle and his normal round. Stepping out at the station that looked so large, so orderly and civilised by comparison with the others they had passed – electric fans hung from the high ceiling, magazines and paperbacks were arrayed on the shelves of Wheeler’s stall – he fell silent and resumed his ordinarily grim appearance. Uma was relieved; the disintegration of Papa’s personality had pained her as much as that of her marriage. 5 10 15

At home Mama opened every one of the trunks Papa had insisted Uma pack and bring with her, and checked every item in them. Papa had managed to retrieve her jewellery by threatening the family with legal action – oh, what a mistake they had made by choosing a bride from a legal family, an educated family! – but it had been too demeaning to fight for every pot and pan they had contributed to the kitchen, and there was a great deal, Mama lamented, that was lost. While these scenes were being played out in the centre, the heart of the family and household, Arun withdrew to its outermost limits, hiding in his room under a blanket of comic books. If anyone were to look in, Arun was not to be found; in his place were Captain Marvel, Superman and Phantom. 20 25

At night, in the dark and the silence, Aruna whispered to her sister, ‘Uma. Uma. Did – did he touch you, Uma?’ making Uma bury her head in her pillow and howl ‘No! No!’ so that Aruna fell back with a little sigh of disappointment. Next day she reported it to ayah who reported it to Mama. Mama and ayah appeared relieved, as if a great weight had been lifted from them. 30

The marriage was somehow cancelled, annulled.

ANITA DESAI, from *Fasting, Feasting* (2001)

(e)

That body should speak	
When silence is,	
Limbs dance	
The grief sealed in memory;	
That body might become tongue	5
Tempered to speech	
And where the latter falters	
Paper with its words	
The crack of silence;	
That skin become	10
Slur slide susurrations	
Polyphony and rhythm — the drum;	
The emptied skull a gourd	
filled	
With the potions of determine	15
That compel the split in bridge	
Between speech and magic	
Force and word;	
The harp of accompaniment the ribcage	
Strung with the taut in gut;	20
Flute or drumstick the bones.	
When silence is	
Abdication of word tongue and lip	
Ashes of once in what was	
... Silence	25
Song word speech	
Might I ... like Philomela ...sing	
continue	
over	
into	30
...pure utterance	

M. NourbeSe Philip, from 'she tries her tongue, her silence softly breaks' (1989)

(f)

The interrogation continued for nearly two hours. He wanted to know her thoughts on Shias, homosexuals, the Queen, democracy, *The Great British Bake Off*, the invasion of Iraq, Israel, suicide bombers, dating websites. After that early slip regarding her Britishness, she settled into the manner that she'd practiced with Aneeka playing the role of the interrogating officer, Isma responding to her sister as though she were a customer of dubious political opinions whose business she didn't want to lose by voicing strenuously opposing views but to whom she didn't see the need to lie, either. ('When people talk about the enmity between Shias and Sunni it usually centres around some political imbalance of power, such as in Iraq or Syria—as a Brit, I don't distinguish between one Muslim and another.' 'Occupying other people's territory generally causes more problems than it solves' — this served for both Iraq and Israel. 'Killing civilians is sinful—that's equally true if the manner of killing is a suicide bombing or aerial bombardments or drone strikes.') There were long intervals of silence between each answer and the next question as the man clicked keys on her laptop, examining her browser history. He knew that she was interested in the marital status of an actor from a popular TV series; that wearing a hijab didn't stop her from buying expensive products to tame her frizzy hair; that she had searched for 'how to make small talk with Americans'.

'You know, you don't have to be so compliant about everything,' Aneeka had said during the role-playing. Her sister, not quite nineteen, with her law-student brain, who knew everything about her rights and nothing about the fragility of her place in the world. 'For instance, if they ask you about the Queen, just say, "As an Asian I have to admire her colour palette." It's important to show at least a tiny bit of contempt for the whole process.' Instead, Isma had responded, 'I greatly admire Her Majesty's commitment to her role.' But there had been comfort in hearing her sister's alternative answers in her head, her *Ha!* of triumph when the official asked a question she'd anticipated and that Isma had dismissed, such as the *Great British Bake Off* one. Well, if they didn't let her board this plane — or any one after this — she would go home to Aneeka, which is what half Isma's heart knew it should do in any case.

KAMILA SHAMSIE from *Home Fire* (2017)

(g)

In short, my spirit-companions played havoc with my education. They made me seem strange to the other children, and so I didn't have many friends. There was only Ade, but he was succumbing to the world of spirits. His epileptic spells were luring him away from life. I was often lonely. And my spirit-companions used my loneliness to invade my life in new ways. They expanded my being and filled me with mysterious spaces. They insinuated themselves into my vision. In the midst of my new solitude, and particularly at night when I was asleep, they frequently read to me from invisible books of history, science, philosophy, musicology and geography. They poured all manner of arcane knowledge into my head. They filled me to bursting with spirit books of literature, archaeology, quantum physics and advanced lessons in counterpoint and chiaroscuro long before I could even read. They filled me with images of Zimbabwean rock paintings and Nordic gods, with Luo proverbs, Ashante songs, and Byzantine melodies, with Zulu epics and stories of ancient, forgotten heroes. All this made me babble out the strangest things and made my teachers hate me. Tired of being singled out for merciless whipping, I took to sneaking from class and wandering through the ghetto.

Yes, those relentless spirit-companions of mine poured into me the prophecies of Nostradamus and the wild visions of African mystics and the theories of Pythagoras and hundreds of useless facts. Meanwhile I walked barefoot in a world breaking down under the force of hunger. Meanwhile I staggered beneath the demonic smile of the yellow sun which sets bushes and newspapers alight.

BEN OKRI from *Songs of Enchantment* (1993)

SECTION B

2. 'My argument is that history is made by men and women, just as it can also be unmade and rewritten, always with various silences and elisions, always with shapes imposed and disfigurements tolerated.' (EDWARD SAID)
Considering this quotation, reflect on the making and unmaking of history in postcolonial literature you have read.
3. 'This gathering of broken pieces is the care and pain of the Antilles, and if the pieces are disparate, ill-fitting, they contain more pain than their original sculpture, those icons and sacred vessels taken for granted in their ancestral places. Antillean art is this restoration of our shattered histories, our shards of vocabulary, our archipelago becoming a synonym for pieces broken off from the original continent...' (DEREK WALCOTT)
Taking Walcott's quote as a starting point, discuss the notion of fragments and restoration in postcolonial literature.
4. '[...] the so-called colonial world is still unfolding—more accurately, unravelling—inside the post-colonial...' (STUART HALL)
How does the colonial continue to unfold in postcolonial work(s) you have read?
5. 'Why this transformation [the advent of the modern sense of time] should be so important for the birth of the imagined community of the nation can best be seen if we consider the basic structure of two forms of imagining which first flowered in Europe in the eighteenth century: the novel and the newspaper. For these forms provided the technical means for 're-presenting' the kind of imagined community that is the nation.' (BENEDICT ANDERSON)
Taking this quote as a starting point, discuss the relationship between nationalism and literature in postcolonial works.
6. 'The moment we choose to love, we begin to move against domination, against oppression.' (bell hooks)
Discuss the role of love **and/or** intimacy and oppression in works you've read.
7. 'Now when I was a little chap I had a passion for maps. I would look for hours at South America, or Africa, or Australia, and lose myself in all the glories of exploration. At that time there were many blank spaces on the earth, and when I saw one that looked particularly inviting on a map (but they all look that) I would put my finger on it and say, "When I grow up I will go there."' (JOSEPH CONRAD)
Considering this passage, discuss the relationship between imperialism and maps in postcolonial literature.

8. 'The politics of translation takes on a massive life of its own if you see language as the process of meaning construction.' (GAYATRI CHAKRAVORTY SPIVAK)
What are the politics of translation **and/or** bilingualism in works you've read?

9. 'Culture becomes the site of intense struggle. Indeed, most national liberation movements start by rejecting the culture of the colonizer by repudiating his religious and educational systems. People created their own songs, poems, dances, narratives and sayings which embody a structure of values diametrically opposed to that of the oppressing race, nation and class. Often, they will take the songs and hymns of the oppressor and give them an entirely different emphasis, interpretation and meaning.' (NGŪGĨ WA THIONG'O)
Discuss this passage in relation to any work or works.

10. '[I]mperialism cannot be fully understood without a theory of gender power. Gender power was not the superficial patina of empire, an ephemeral gloss over the more decisive mechanics of race and class. Rather, gender dynamics were, from the outset, fundamental to the securing and maintaining of the imperial enterprise.' (ANNE MCCLINTOCK)
What theories of gender power are suggested in postcolonial works you've read?

11. 'I am from there. I am from here.
I am not there and I am not here.
I have two names, which meet and part,
and I have two languages.
I forget which of them I dream in.'
(MAHMOUD DARWISH)
Discuss this stanza in relation to migration **and/or** exile in postcolonial literature.

12. 'It is only from the capitalist viewpoint that being productive is a moral virtue, not to say a moral imperative. From the viewpoint of the working class, being productive simply means being exploited.' (SILVIA FEDERICI)
Taking this quotation as a starting point, discuss the role of class **and/or** economic exploitation in any work or works you have read.

13. 'Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants.' (GLORIA ANZALDÚA)
In light of this passage, how are boundaries and borders (natural and unnatural) represented in postcolonial literature you have read?

14. 'Make Kin Not Babies.' (DONNA HARAWAY)
Discuss the concept of kin in **one or more** works.
15. 'To be white is to be human; to be white is universal. I only know this because I am not.' (RENI EDDO-LODGE)
How is whiteness represented in **one or more** works you have read?
16. 'That is, a woman faces a kind of discrimination at the intersections of her multiple identities which she may not face if she would belong singularly to any of the particular social, cultural, economic, political, or regional categories.' (SUNAINA ARYA and AAKASH SINGH RATHORE)
Discuss this quote in relationship to **one or more** works.
17. 'It is not a dead society that we want to revive. We leave that to those who go in for exoticism. Nor is it the present colonial society that we wish to prolong, the most putrid carrion that ever rotted under the sun. It is a new society that we must create.' (AIMÉ CÉSAIRE)
In light of Césaire's reflection, how does postcolonial literature depict new societies beyond or after colonialism?
18. 'Most people do not really want freedom, because freedom involves responsibility, and most people are frightened of responsibility.' (SIGMUND FREUD)
Explore the notion of freedom in **any** work or works.
19. 'When history sleeps, it speaks in dreams: on the brow of the sleeping people, the poem is a constellation of blood...' (OCTAVIO PAZ)
Discuss dreams **and/or** visions in **any** work(s), considering this stanza.
20. 'Landscape is a natural scene mediated by culture. It is both a represented and presented space, both a signifier and a signified, both a frame and what a frame contains, both a real place and its simulacrum, both a package and the commodity inside the package.' (W.J.T. MITCHELL)
What role do land and landscape play in **one or more** works you have read?

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