

STELLA MARIS COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS) CHENNAI 600 086
(For candidates admitted during the academic year 2008–09)

SUBJECT CODE: EL/MC/PT34

B.A. DEGREE EXAMINATION, NOVEMBER 2009
BRANCH XII – ENGLISH
THIRD SEMESTER

COURSE : MAJOR – CORE
PAPER : POETRY - II
TIME : 3 HOURS

MAX. MARKS : 100

Section - A

Attempt any two.

(2x 20 = 40)

Read the lines and answer the questions.

1. His soul stretched tight across the skies
That fade behind a city block,
Or trampled by insistent feet
At four and five and six o'clock;
And short square fingers stuffing pipes,
And evening newspapers, and eyes
Assured of certain certainties,
The conscience of a blackened street
Impatient to assume the world.

I am moved by fancies that are curled
Around these images, and cling:
The notion of some infinitely gentle
Infinitely suffering thing.

Wipe your hand across your mouth, and laugh;
The worlds revolve like ancient women
Gathering fuel in vacant lots.

- a) Discuss these lines as objectifying the infernal vision of urban life. (350 words; 10 marks)
b) Explain the word 'revolves' in the context of the poem. (200 words; 5 marks)
c) Comment on 'newspapers' as an image used by the poet. (200 words; 5 marks)

2. Turning and turning in the widening gyre
 The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
 Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
 Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
 The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
 The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
 The best lack all conviction, while the worst
 Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
 Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
 The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
 When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi
 Troubles my sight: a waste of desert sand;
 A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
 A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
 Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
 Wind shadows of the indignant desert birds.
 The darkness drops again but now I know
 That twenty centuries of stony sleep
 Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
 And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
 Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

- a) How does the poet generalise his fear into a historical statement. (350 words; 10 marks)
- b) Explain the metaphor of the 'gyre' in the context of the poem. (200 words; 5 marks)
- c) Explain the term 'revelation' as used in the poem. (200 words; 5 marks)

3. Poor dead flower? when did you forget you were a
 flower? when did you look at your skin and
 decide you were an impotent dirty old locomotive?
 The ghost of a locomotive? the specter and
 shade of a once powerful mad American locomotive?
 You were never no locomotive, Sunflower, you were a
 sunflower!
 And you Locomotive, you are a locomotive, forget me
 not!
 So I grabbed up the skeleton thick sunflower and stuck
 it at my side like a scepter,
 and deliver my sermon to my soul, and Jack's soul
 too, and anyone who'll listen,
 --We're not our skin of grime, we're not our dread
 bleak dusty imageless locomotive, we're all
 beautiful golden sunflowers inside, we're blessed

by our own seed & golden hairy naked
accomplishment-bodies growing into mad black
formal sunflowers in the sunset, spied on by our
eyes under the shadow of the mad locomotive
riverbank sunset Frisco hilly tincan evening
sitdown vision.

- a) Discuss an important theme of the poem that is embedded in these lines. (350 words; 10 marks)
- b) (i) Comment on Ginsberg's use of "sunflower". (200 words; 5 marks)
(ii) Explain "We're not our skin of grime". (200 words; 5 marks)

4. Kashmir shrinks into my mailbox,
my home a neat four by six inches.
I always loved neatness. Now I hold
the half-inch Himalayas in my hand.

This is home. And this the closest
I'll ever be to home. When I return,
the colors won't be so brilliant,
the Jhelum's waters so clean,
so ultramarine. My love
so overexposed.

And my memory will be a little
out of focus,
a giant negative, black
and white, still undeveloped.

- a) Comment on the concept of the 'migrant writer/writer-in-exile' experience as seen in these lines. (350 words; 10 marks)
- b) What do you understand by the poet's use of the term 'memory'? (200 words; 5 marks)
- c) Write a short note on the poet's style. (200 words; 5 marks)

Section - B

Write three essays in approximately 750 words each:

(3 x 20 = 60)

1. Discuss the theme of Jackie Kay's poem "In My Country".
2. Explain how Sylvia Plath in her poem "Daddy" universalises her sufferings through a fusion of the private past and the public present.
3. How does Ted Hughes' poem "The Thought Fox" capture the process of writing?
4. Evaluate Pablo Neruda as a realist from a reading of his poem "The Dictators".
5. Christopher Okigbo is known by critics and contemporaries as a "poet of destiny". Illustrate this view from your reading of "Come Thunder".
