

B.A. DEGREE EXAMINATION, NOVEMBER 2018
BRANCH XII – ENGLISH
FIFTH SEMESTER

COURSE : MAJOR – CORE

PAPER : EAST AND SOUTH EAST ASIAN LITERATURES

TIME : 3 HOURS

MAX. MARKS: 100

SECTION A

I. Answer any three of the following in about 350 words each: (3x15=45 marks)

- 1) How does Tenzin Tsundue give voice to the pain of his countrymen?
- 2) Analyse Khaleda Salahuddin's story "Relief Camp" as a humanist tale.
- 3) Critically evaluate the man-woman relationship in Titis Basino's "Her".
- 4) Discuss Xue Mo's "Old Man Xingjang" as a sad tale about an old country man.
- 5) How does the grandmother in "Her Infinite Variety" describe her childhood memory of country life?

SECTION B

II. Answer any two of the following in about 600 words each: (2x20=40 marks)

- 6) *The Kite Runner* is set against a backdrop of tumultuous events. Elaborate.
- 7) How has Shanmugalingam used drama to echo the Sri Lankan problem?
- 8) Comment on Muhammad Haji Salleh's "The Teller of Tales" as a metapoem.
- 9) Why is Masaoka Shiki credited with modernising Japan's traditional verse forms?

SECTION C

III. Analyse the passage given below. (1x15=15 marks)

He asked permission to follow Luy's mother into her home. His face turned pale when he saw the family's altar in the centre of the house and, on it, a photograph of a soldier of the Vietnamese People's Army. His hands, with a camera, trembled as the interpreter told him that the woman's son had died in the war and that she still didn't know where he was buried. The mother was seventy-one years old; her last life wish was to bring home whatever remained of her son, to wash his bones in sweetened water, and to make him a proper burial. She hadn't yet been able to do that.

The American followed Asian custom by standing, head bowed, his palms together in prayerful silence. He stood in front of Luy's altar as a representative of dead and living Americans, expressing compassion for the mothers in Viet Nam.

After he'd seen the simple house and the tattered clothes the old woman wore, the American thought of giving Luy's mother a few dollar notes. But the interpreter put out his hand in time to stop him and then made a long speech, turning to the curious villagers who had gathered.

"I just explained to the American how in Vietnam each village has an altar to the village spirit and to the people who made some great contribution to our country and its people, and how at its cemetery each village has a small pagoda for wandering souls, where we pray for the missing. In the past, this area was a battle front. The enemy died in droves. And so I explained that on a nearby hill you built a small temple to the lonely spirits. I told him how each year in the Seventh Month on the Day of Lonely Souls, you go to that altar to light incense in a ceremony to honor the wandering souls. I told him about the offerings of boiled sweet potatoes, rice wafers, popcorn, and white rice soup ladled into 'bowls' made from banyan leaves, about the first secret buds of bamboo shoots."

The gathered villagers nodded their heads. As for the American, his eyes opened wide as if he'd just stepped into a strange world.
