

BOWEN UNIVERSITY, IWO, OSUN STATE

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

2018/2019 SECOND SEMESTER EXAMINATIONS

COURSE CODE: ENG 333

TIME ALLOWED: 2 Hours 30 MINS

COURSE TITLE: LITERARY ANALYSIS

DATE: MAY, JUNE, 2019

**INSTRUCTIONS: ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS. THE TEXTS OF THE POEMS FOR QUESTIONS 2 AND 3 ARE ATTACHED.**

1. Write an essay on the social and cultural functions of poetry, referring to what some poets and critics expect of the role of poetry in their society. (30 marks)
2. Write a comparative study of the following poems, paying particular attention to the poet's attitude to the theme of mortality and setting in: (i) Wole Soyinka, 'Post Mortem' and Lenrie Peters 'You lie there Naked'.
3. Write a critical analysis of ONE of the following poems focusing, among other matters, on the poet's handling of the theme of exile and solitude:  
**Either: (a) Arthur Nortje's 'Autopsy'**  
**Or: (b) Lenrie Peters' 'He Walk Alone'**

## Poems for Questions 2

### **POST MORTEM** (Wole Soyinka)

there are more functions to a freezing plant  
than stocking beer; cold biers of mortuaries  
submit their dues, harnessed – glory be! –

in the cold hand of death...  
his mouth was cotton filled, his man-pike  
shrunk to sub-soil grub

his head was hollowed and his brain  
on scales- was this a trick to prove  
fore-knowledge after death?

his flesh confesses what has stilled  
his tongue; masked fingers think from him  
to learn, how not to die.

let us love all things of grey; grey slabs  
grey scalpel, one grey sleep and form,  
grey images.

### **YOU LIE THERE NAKED** (Lenrie Peters)

You lie there naked  
though shrouds obscure your face.  
Your body hairs shaved,  
underlines your numerical fate.

Blue anaesthetic fumes  
rise, float, encircle your brain  
dreaming, nothing but sand dunes;  
outside the hapless patter of rain

A stranger hovers over you  
himself protected, hidden from view -  
the scalpel trembles in his hand  
heavy with the passage of years.

All is controlled, serene  
a sharp light penetrates your skin  
illuminates your gross disease  
deeper than your consciousness of sin.

## Poems for Questions 3

### **AUTOPSY** ( Arthur Nortje)

My teachers are dead men. I was too young  
to grasp their anxieties, too nominal an exile  
to mount such intensities of song;  
knowing only the blond  
colossus vomits its indigestible  
black stepchildren like autotoxins.

Who can endure the succubus?  
She who had taught them proudness of tongue  
drank an aphrodisiac, then swallowed  
a purgative to justify the wrong.  
Her iron-fisted ogre of a son  
straddled the drug-blurred townships,  
breathing hygiene blasts of justice.

Rooted bacteria had their numbers  
swiftly reduced in the harsh sunlight of arc-lamps,  
the arid atmosphere where jackboots scrape  
like crackling electric, and tape recorders  
ingest forced words like white corpuscles,  
until the sterile quarantine of dungeons  
enveloped them with piteous oblivion.

### **HE WALKS ALONE** (Lenrie Peters)

He walks alone  
head bowed with memories  
exile in the park  
some playful thing of long ago  
glues him to a shop window

Faded suit sharp lined  
loosely held by his proud heart  
shoes scaled the polish  
cannot comprehend; too much  
to tell of harsh acceptances

No coward he  
repository of rejected talents  
an ounce of earth  
silted weightily in his heart.  
the breaking point is looking back

Crossed the Rubicon  
race, nationality, ideology, religion  
arrowed from earth to moon  
founder of a new brotherhood  
no hero he not of our nation born