



FINAL EXAMINATION
MARCH 2024

COURSE TITLE	ASIAN LITERATURE IN ENGLISH
COURSE CODE	ELIT4173
DATE/DAY	19 JUNE 2024 / WEDNESDAY
TIME/DURATION	02:00 PM - 04:00 PM / 02 Hour(s) 00 Minute(s)

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES :

1. Please read the instruction under each section carefully.
2. Candidates are reminded not to bring into examination hall/room any form of written materials or electronic gadget except for stationery that is permitted by the Invigilator.
3. Students who are caught breaching the Examination Rules and Regulation will be charged with an academic dishonesty and if found guilty of the offence, the maximum penalty is expulsion from the University.

(This Question Paper consists of 4 Printed Pages including front page)

*****DO NOT OPEN THE QUESTION PAPER UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO*****

This question paper contains THREE (3) questions. Answer ALL questions in the answer booklet. [50 MARKS]

QUESTION 1

(14 Marks)

Cheng Naishan's *Why Parents Worry* (1986) explores common intergenerational family conflicts in the Chinese society.

In your response:

- a) Compare and contrast **TWO (2)** intergenerational family conflicts faced by the main characters in the short story. (10 marks)
- b) In relation to a), discuss whether these conflicts are only depicted in Chinese literature in English. Justify your answer with examples. (4 marks)

QUESTION 2

(16 Marks)

Jhumpa Lahiri mainly produces works focusing on cultural identity and displacement.

In your response:

- a) Based on *Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine* (1999), discuss how the characterization of Lilia is used in developing the theme of cultural identity and displacement. (8 marks)
- b) Based on *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999), discuss how the Das family is used in developing the theme of cultural identity and displacement. (8 marks)

QUESTION 3

(20 Marks)

Question 3 is based on Mohsin Hamid's short narrative, *A Beheading* (2010) as provided in Text 1.

I hear the window shatter. There's no air conditioner on to muffle the sound. I get out of bed. I wish I wasn't my age. I wish I was as old as my parents. Or as young as my son. I wish it didn't have to be me telling my wife to stay where she is, saying everything will be fine in a voice she doesn't believe and I don't believe either. We both hear the shouting downstairs. 'Put on some clothes,' I'm saying to her. 'It'll be better if you're wearing clothes.'

The electricity's gone so I use my phone to light the way. Already there's the sound of men running up the wooden stairs. I shut the bedroom door and lock it behind me. Shadows are jumping and stretching from multiple torches. I raise both my hands. 'I'm here,' I say to them. I want to say it loudly. I sound like a whispering child. 'Please. Everything is all right.'

I'm on the floor. Someone has hit me. I don't know if it was with a hand or a club. My mouth is full of liquid. I can't get any words out. I'm gagging and I have to let my jaw hang open so I can breathe. Behind my back my wrists are being taped together. It feels like electrical tape, the kind of tape you wrap around a tennis ball for street cricket when you're a kid. I'm lying on my face and there's a grinding pain from that so I make some noise before I black out.

I'm between two men. They're holding me under my armpits and dragging me out the front door. I don't know how much time has passed. It's still night. The electricity has come back so the gate lights are on. The gatekeeper is dead. He's an old man and he's lying folded in on himself. His face is so thin. He looks like we've been starving him. I'm wondering how they killed him. I'm looking at him, looking for blood. But I don't have enough time.

I think there are four of them. They have a copper-coloured '81 Corolla. We used to have a car like that when I was growing up. This one is in bad shape. They open the trunk and dump me inside. I can't see anything. My face is partly on a rough carpet. The other part is on the spare tyre. Its rubber sticks to me. Or maybe I'm sticking to it. The shocks are shot, and every bump slams through the car. I think of being at the dentist, when it's already hurting and you know it's going to hurt more and you just wait and try to think of mind tricks to make it hurt less.

I feel feverish, a high, malarial fever that makes me shiver and drift in and out of sleep. I hope they didn't kill my son and my wife and my parents. I hope they didn't rape my wife. I hope whatever they do to me they don't use acid on me. I don't want to die but I don't mind dying. I just don't want to be tortured. I don't want anyone to crush my balls with a pair of pliers and put his cigarette out in my eye. I don't want this car ride ever to end. I'm getting used to it now.

They take me out in the sunlight. They're big men. Bigger than me. They take me into a house with paint peeling off the walls and put me in a bathroom with no windows, just a skylight. I've already pissed myself and my legs itch from dried urine. I don't make a sound. I sit there and prepare to cooperate. I wish I could remember how to say my prayers. I'd ask them to let me pray. Show them we're the same. But I can't risk it. I'll make a mistake and if they see that, things will be even worse for me. Maybe I can just mumble to myself and they'll think I'm religious.

They come back when it's dark. They're speaking a language I don't understand. I don't think it's Arabic or Pashto. What is it? Is it fucking Chechen? What is that fucking language? Who the fuck are these people? Tears are coming out of my eyes. That's good. The more pathetic I look, the better. 'Sirs,' I say in the most grovelling Urdu I can manage. 'What have I done? I beg your forgiveness.' My mouth doesn't work properly so I have to speak slowly. Even then I sound like I'm drunk. Or like someone has cut off half my tongue.

They ignore me. One is setting up a video camera on a tripod. The other is plugging a light into a portable UPS unit the size of a car battery. I know this. I don't want this. I don't want to be that goat. The one we bought for Big Eid. I used to feed it after school. We kept it for a week. I would break shoots off the hedge, green shoots that stained my hands, and feed them to that goat. It was a nice goat, but with dead eyes. I didn't like its eyes. I liked the way it chewed sideways. It was like a pet. I never petted it, but it was like a pet. It had small feet. It could stand on a brick to reach the leaves. My parents let me watch a man come and wrestle it to the ground and say a prayer and sacrifice it to God.

'Look, don't do this.' I'm speaking English now, slurring, making no sense. The words are just dribbling out of my mouth. I can't stop them. They're like tears. 'I've always censored myself. I've never written about religion. I've always tried to be respectful. If I've made a mistake just tell me. Tell me what to write. I'll never write again. I'll never write again if you don't want me to. It doesn't matter to me. It's not important. We're the same. All of us. I swear it.'

They tape my mouth shut and pin me flat on my stomach. One of them gets behind me and pulls my head up by the hair. It feels sexual the way he does it. I wonder if my wife is still alive and if she's going to sleep with another man after I'm gone. How many men is she going to sleep with? I hope she doesn't. I hope she's still alive. I can see the long knife in his hand. He's speaking into the camera. I don't want to watch. I shut my eyes. I want to do something to make my heart explode so I can be gone now. I don't want to stay.

Then I hear it. I hear the sound of my blood rushing out and I open my eyes to see it on the floor like ink and I watch as I end before I am empty.

Source: Mohsin Hamid. (2010). *A Beheading*. *Granta*. <https://granta.com/a-beheading/>

Text 1

In your response:

- a) Discuss **TWO (2)** literary devices or techniques used by the author and their functions in the short narrative. (8 marks)
- b) Discuss **THREE (3)** social realities of contemporary Pakistani society as portrayed in the short narrative. (12 marks)

*** END OF QUESTION PAPER ***

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