

English and American Literature (150 points)

I . Read the following passages and identify the author and the title of each of them. (20 points)

1. Passage 1 (4 points)

A: A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine.

The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

B: Most rightful judge!

A: And you must cut this flesh from off his breast.

The law allows it and the court awards it.

B: Most learned judge! A sentence! Come, prepare.

A: Tarry a little; there is something else.

This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood:

The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh.'

Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;

But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed

One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods

Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate

Unto the state of Venice.

C: O upright judge!

Mark, Jew, ----O learned judge!

B: Is that the law?

2. (omission)

3. (omission)

4. (omission)

5. (omission)

II. Define the following literary terms. (20 points)

1. Stream of consciousness (5 points)

2. (omission)

3. (omission)

4. (omission)

III. Appreciation of English and American literature

Read the following excerpts and answer the questions. (70 points)

1. Appreciation of English literature (35 points)

Against these far stretches of country rose, in front of the other city edifices, a large red-brick building, with level grey roofs, and rows of short barred windows bespeaking captivity– the whole contrasting greatly by its formalism with the quaint irregularities of the Gothic erections. It was somewhat disguised from the road in passing it by yews and evergreen oaks, but it was visible enough up here. The wicket from which the pair had lately emerged was in the wall of this structure. From the middle of the building an ugly flat-topped octagonal tower ascended against the east horizon, and viewed from this spot, on its shady side and against the light, **it seemed the one blot on the city's beauty.** Yet it was with this blot, and not with the beauty, that the two gazers were concerned.

Upon the cornice of the tower a tall staff was fixed. Their eyes were rivetted on it. A few minutes after the hour had struck something moved slowly up the staff, and extended itself upon the breeze. It was a black flag.

“Justice” was done, and the President of the Immortals (in Æschylean phrase) had ended his sport with Tess. And the d’Urberville knights and dames slept on in their tombs unknowing. The two speechless gazers bent themselves down to the earth, as if in prayer, and remained thus a long time, absolutely motionless: the flag continued to wave silently. **As soon as they had strength they arose, joined hands again, and went on.**

Questions:

1. Who are the two gazers? What are they looking at? In what sense is the tower a “blot on the city's beauty”? (10 points)
2. What is your understanding of this supernatural force that plays sport with Tess? What else can be held accountable for her tragedy? (10 points)
3. Making characters join in matrimony is a common practice used to end the novel. With the pair joining hands, the novel concerned here leaves little doubt that a marriage is upcoming. What do you think of this potential marriage? To what extent does the author follow the common practice of ending the novel with

happy marriages? Is there any divergence? (15 points)

2. Appreciation of American literature (35 points)

I heard a Fly buzz—when I died—
The Stillness in the Room
Was like the Stillness in the Air—
Between the Heaves of Storm—

The Eyes around--had wrung them dry—
And Breaths were gathering firm
For that last Onset—when **the King**
Be witnessed—in the Room—

I willed my Keepsakes—Signed away
What portions of me be
Assignable—and then it was
There interposed a **Fly**—

With Blue—uncertain stumbling Buzz—
Between the light—and me—
And then the Windows failed--and then
I could not see to see—

Questions:

1. Try to analyze the poem's style from several perspectives. (10 points)
2. What does the "King" in the second stanza refer to? Do you think the speaker really heard a fly or is it merely a hallucination? What might the fly stand for? (15 points)
3. How does the poet understand death? (10 points)

IV. Essay writing

Choose any TWO from the following topics to write essays about.

(40 points)

1. Feminist critics note that “a woman writer must examine, assimilate, and transcend the extreme images of ‘angel’ and ‘monster’ which male authors have generated for her”. Choose ONE of the major women novelists in the 19th century England and illustrate how she deals with this question of self-definition. Use concrete textual evidence (character, plot, etc.) to support your idea. (20 points)
2. (omission)
3. (omission)