

**B. A. Part II (English Literature)**  
**(This new syllabus is being implemented from the academic session 2013-14)**

Syllabus and Pattern of Question Paper

**Paper I - Poetry**

1. Alfred Lord Tennyson: (a) Break, Break, Break; (b) Ulysses
2. Robert Browning: (a) My Last Duchess; (b) Prospice
3. Matthew Arnold: (a) Dover Beach; (b) Memorial Verses
4. Thomas Hardy (a) The Darkling Thrush; (b) The Voice
5. Gerard Manley Hopkins: (a) Pied Beauty; (b) Thou Art Indeed Just Lord...
6. W. B. Yeats: (a) The Second Coming; (b) Prayer for My Daughter
7. T. S. Eliot: Love Song of Alfred J Prufrock
8. W. H. Auden: In Memory of W. B. Yeats
9. Adil Jussawala: Sea Breeze, Bombay
10. Kamala Das: An Introduction
11. Keki N. Daruwalla: Ghagra in Spate

**Pattern**

The paper will be divided into five units. Unit I will be compulsory and the remaining four units will consist of essay type questions. In setting questions, the following unit-wise division will be observed.

Unit II – Tennyson, Browning, Unit III – Arnold, Hardy, Hopkins, Unit IV- Yeats, Eliot, Auden

Unit V – Jussawalla, Das, Daruwalla

Unit I will consist of six passages from the poets prescribed and candidates will be asked to explain with reference to the context any three. Candidates will be required to answer one question each from Units II, III, IV, and V. Unit I will carry 18 marks and Units II, III, IV and V will carry 8 marks each.

## 1. Alfred Lord Tennyson

### (a) Break, Break, Break

Break, break, break,  
 On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!  
 And I would that my tongue could utter  
 The thoughts that arise in me.

O, well for the fisherman's boy,  
 That he shouts with his sister at play!  
 O, well for the sailor lad,  
 That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on  
 To their haven under the hill;  
 But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,  
 And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break  
 At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!  
 But the tender grace of a day that is dead  
 Will never come back to me.

### (b) Ulysses

It little profits that an idle king,  
 By this still hearth, among these barren crags,  
 Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole  
 Unequal laws unto a savage race,  
 That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.  
 I cannot rest from travel: I will drink  
 Life to the lees: All times I have enjoy'd  
 Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those  
 That loved me, and alone, on shore, and when  
 Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades  
 Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;

For always roaming with a hungry heart  
 Much have I seen and known; cities of men  
 And manners, climates, councils, governments,  
 Myself not least, but honour'd of them all;  
 And drunk delight of battle with my peers,  
 Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.  
 I am a part of all that I have met;  
 Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'  
 Gleams that untravell'd world whose margin fades  
 For ever and forever when I move.  
 How dull it is to pause, to make an end,  
 To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!  
 As tho' to breathe were life! Life piled on life  
 Were all too little, and of one to me  
 Little remains: but every hour is saved  
 From that eternal silence, something more,  
 A bringer of new things; and vile it were  
 For some three suns to store and hoard myself,  
 And this gray spirit yearning in desire  
 To follow knowledge like a sinking star,  
 Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,  
 To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle,—  
 Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil  
 This labour, by slow prudence to make mild  
 A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees  
 Subdue them to the useful and the good.  
 Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere  
 Of common duties, decent not to fail  
 In offices of tenderness, and pay  
 Meet adoration to my household gods,  
 When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail:  
 There gloom the dark, broad seas. My mariners,

Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with me—  
 That ever with a frolic welcome took  
 The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed  
 Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;  
 Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;  
 Death closes all: but something ere the end,  
 Some work of noble note, may yet be done,  
 Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.  
 The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:  
 The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep  
 Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,  
 'T is not too late to seek a newer world.  
 Push off, and sitting well in order smite  
 The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds  
 To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths  
 Of all the western stars, until I die.  
 It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:  
 It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,  
 And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.  
 Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'  
 We are not now that strength which in old days  
 Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are;  
 One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
 Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will  
 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

## 2. Robert Browning

### (a) My Last Duchess

#### *FERRARA*

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,  
 Looking as if she were alive. I call  
 That piece a wonder, now; Fra Pandolf's hands  
 Worked busily a day, and there she stands.

Will't please you sit and look at her? I said  
 "Fra Pandolf" by design, for never read  
 Strangers like you that pictured countenance,  
 The depth and passion of its earnest glance,  
 But to myself they turned (since none puts by  
 The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)  
 And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,  
 How such a glance came there; so, not the first  
 Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not  
 Her husband's presence only, called that spot  
 Of joy into the Duchess' cheek; perhaps  
 Fra Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps  
 Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint  
 Must never hope to reproduce the faint  
 Half-flush that dies along her throat." Such stuff  
 Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough  
 For calling up that spot of joy. She had  
 A heart—how shall I say?— too soon made glad,  
 Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er  
 She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.  
 Sir, 'twas all one! My favour at her breast,  
 The dropping of the daylight in the West,  
 The bough of cherries some officious fool  
 Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule  
 She rode with round the terrace—all and each  
 Would draw from her alike the approving speech,  
 Or blush, at least. She thanked men—good! but thanked  
 Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked  
 My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name  
 With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame  
 This sort of trifling? Even had you skill  
 In speech—which I have not—to make your will  
 Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this  
 Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,  
 Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let  
 Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set

Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse—  
 E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose  
 Never to stoop. Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt,  
 Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without  
 Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;  
 Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands  
 As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet  
 The company below, then. I repeat,  
 The Count your master's known munificence  
 Is ample warrant that no just pretense  
 Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;  
 Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed  
 At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go  
 Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,  
 Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,  
 Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

**(b) Prospice**

Fear death?—to feel the fog in my throat,  
 The mist in my face,  
 When the snows begin, and the blasts denote  
 I am nearing the place,  
 The power of the night, the press of the storm,  
 The post of the foe;  
 Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,  
 Yet the strong man must go:  
 For the journey is done and the summit attained,  
 And the barriers fall,  
 Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,  
 The reward of it all.  
 I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,  
 The best and the last!  
 I would hate that death bandaged my eyes and forbore,  
 And bade me creep past.  
 No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers

The heroes of old,  
 Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears  
 Of pain, darkness and cold.  
 For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,  
 The black minute's at end,  
 And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,  
 Shall dwindle, shall blend,  
 Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,  
 Then a light, then thy breast,  
 O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,  
 And with God be the rest

### 3. Matthew Arnold

#### (a) Dover Beach

The sea is calm tonight.  
 The tide is full, the moon lies fair  
 Upon the straits; on the French coast the light  
 Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,  
 Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.  
 Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!  
 Only, from the long line of spray  
 Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,  
 Listen! you hear the grating roar  
 Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,  
 At their return, up the high strand,  
 Begin, and cease, and then again begin,  
 With tremulous cadence slow, and bring  
 The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago  
 Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought  
 Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow  
 Of human misery; we

Find also in the sound a thought,  
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith  
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore  
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.  
But now I only hear  
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,  
Retreating, to the breath  
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear  
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true  
To one another! for the world, which seems  
To lie before us like a land of dreams,  
So various, so beautiful, so new,  
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,  
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;  
And we are here as on a darkling plain  
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,  
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

**(b) Memorial Verses**

Goethe in Weimar sleeps, and Greece,  
Long since, saw Byron's struggle cease.  
But one such death remain'd to come;  
The last poetic voice is dumb—  
We stand to-day by Wordsworth's tomb.

When Byron's eyes were shut in death,  
We bow'd our head and held our breath.  
He taught us little; but our soul  
Had *felt* him like the thunder's roll.  
With shivering heart the strife we saw  
Of passion with eternal law;  
And yet with reverential awe  
We watch'd the fount of fiery life



Which served for that Titanic strife.

When Goethe's death was told, we said:  
Sunk, then, is Europe's sagest head.  
Physician of the iron age,  
Goethe has done his pilgrimage.  
He took the suffering human race,  
He read each wound, each weakness clear;  
And struck his finger on the place,  
And said: *Thou ailest here, and here!*

He look'd on Europe's dying hour  
Of fitful dream and feverish power;  
His eye plunged down the weltering strife,  
The turmoil of expiring life—  
He said: The end is everywhere,  
Art still has truth, take refuge there!  
And he was happy, if to know  
Causes of things, and far below  
His feet to see the lurid flow  
Of terror, and insane distress,  
And headlong fate, be happiness.

And Wordsworth!—Ah, pale ghosts, rejoice!  
For never has such soothing voice  
Been to your shadowy world convey'd,  
Since erst, at morn, some wandering shade  
Heard the clear song of Orpheus come  
Through Hades, and the mournful gloom.  
Wordsworth has gone from us—and ye,  
Ah, may ye feel his voice as we!  
He too upon a wintry clime  
Had fallen—on this iron time  
Of doubts, disputes, distractions, fears.  
He found us when the age had bound  
Our souls in its benumbing round;  
He spoke, and loosed our heart in tears.

He laid us as we lay at birth  
 On the cool flowery lap of earth,  
 Smiles broke from us and we had ease;

The hills were round us, and the breeze  
 Went o'er the sun-lit fields again;  
 Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.  
 Our youth return'd; for there was shed  
 On spirits that had long been dead,  
 Spirits dried up and closely furl'd,  
 The freshness of the early world.

Ah! since dark days still bring to light  
 Man's prudence and man's fiery might,  
 Time may restore us in his course  
 Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force;  
 But where will Europe's latter hour  
 Again find Wordsworth's healing power?  
 Others will teach us how to dare,  
 And against fear our breast to steel;  
 Others will strengthen us to bear—  
 But who, ah! who, will make us feel?  
 The cloud of mortal destiny,  
 Others will front it fearlessly—  
 But who, like him, will put it by?

Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,  
 O Rotha, with thy living wave!  
 Sing him thy best! for few or none  
 Hears thy voice right, now he is gone.

#### 4. Thomas Hardy

##### (a) The Darkling Thrush

I leant upon a coppice gate  
 When Frost was spectre-grey,

And Winter's dregs made desolate  
 The weakening eye of day.  
 The tangled bine-stems scored the sky  
 Like strings of broken lyres,  
 And all mankind that haunted nigh  
 Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be  
 The Century's corpse outleant,  
 His crypt the cloudy canopy,  
 The wind his death-lament.  
 The ancient pulse of germ and birth  
 Was shrunken hard and dry,  
 And every spirit upon earth  
 Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice arose among  
 The bleak twigs overhead  
 In a full-hearted evensong  
 Of joy illimited;  
 An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,  
 In blast-beruffled plume,  
 Had chosen thus to fling his soul  
 Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carolings  
 Of such ecstatic sound  
 Was written on terrestrial things  
 Afar or nigh around,  
 That I could think there trembled through  
 His happy good-night air  
 Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew  
 And I was unaware.

**(b) The Voice**

Woman much missed, how you call to me, call to me,  
 Saying that now you are not as you were  
 When you had changed from the one who was all to me,  
 But as at first, when our day was fair.

Can it be you that I hear? Let me view you, then,  
 Standing as when I drew near to the town  
 Where you would wait for me: yes, as I knew you then,  
 Even to the original air-blue gown!

Or is it only the breeze, in its listlessness  
 Travelling across the wet mead to me here,  
 You being ever dissolved to wan wistlessness,  
 Heard no more again far or near?

Thus I; faltering forward,  
 Leaves around me falling,  
 Wind oozing thin through the thorn from norward,  
 And the woman calling.

*Source: Poets of the English Language (Viking Press, 1950)*

## 5. Gerard Manley Hopkins

### (a) Pied Beauty

Glory be to God for dappled things –  
 For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;  
 For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;  
 Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;  
 Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough;  
 And áll trádes, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;

Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)  
 With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;  
 He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:  
                   Praise him.

Source: *Gerard Manley Hopkins: Poems and Prose* (Penguin Classics, 1985)

**(b) Thou Art Indeed Just Lord...**

*Justus quidem tu es, Domine, si disputem tecum; verumtamen  
 justa loquar ad te: Quare via impiorum prosperatur? &c.*

Thou art indeed just, Lord, if I contend  
 With thee; but, sir, so what I plead is just.  
 Why do sinners' ways prosper? and why must  
 Disappointment all I endeavour end?  
     Wert thou my enemy, O thou my friend,  
 How wouldst thou worse, I wonder, than thou dost  
 Defeat, thwart me? Oh, the sots and thralls of lust  
 Do in spare hours more thrive than I that spend,  
 Sir, life upon thy cause. See, banks and brakes  
 Now, leavèd how thick! lacèd they are again  
 With fretty chervil, look, and fresh wind shakes  
 Them; birds build – but not I build; no, but strain,  
 Time's eunuch, and not breed one work that wakes.  
 Mine, O thou lord of life, send my roots rain.

Source: *Gerard Manley Hopkins: Poems and Prose* (Penguin Classics, 1985)

## 6. W. B. Yeats

**(a) The Second Coming**

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: somewhere in sands of the desert  
 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  
 Reel 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?

Source: *The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats* (1989)

### (c) Prayer for My Daughter

Once more the storm is howling, and half hid  
 Under this cradle-hood and coverlid  
 My child sleeps on. There is no obstacle  
 But Gregory's Wood and one bare hill  
 Whereby the haystack and roof-levelling wind,  
 Bred on the Atlantic, can be stayed;  
 And for an hour I have walked and prayed  
 Because of the great gloom that is in my mind.

I have walked and prayed for this young child an hour,

And heard the sea-wind scream upon the tower,  
 And under the arches of the bridge, and scream  
 In the elms above the flooded stream;  
 Imagining in excited reverie  
 That the future years had come  
 Dancing to a frenzied drum  
 Out of the murderous innocence of the sea.

May she be granted beauty, and yet not  
 Beauty to make a stranger's eye distraught,  
 Or hers before a looking-glass; for such,  
 Being made beautiful overmuch,  
 Consider beauty a sufficient end,  
 Lose natural kindness, and maybe  
 The heart-revealing intimacy  
 That chooses right, and never find a friend.

Helen, being chosen, found life flat and dull,  
 And later had much trouble from a fool;  
 While that great Queen that rose out of the spray,  
 Being fatherless, could have her way,  
 Yet chose a bandy-legged smith for man.  
 It's certain that fine women eat  
 A crazy salad with their meat  
 Whereby the Horn of Plenty is undone.

In courtesy I'd have her chiefly learned;  
 Hearts are not had as a gift, but hearts are earned  
 By those that are not entirely beautiful.  
 Yet many, that have played the fool  
 For beauty's very self, has charm made wise;  
 And many a poor man that has roved,  
 Loved and thought himself beloved,  
 From a glad kindness cannot take his eyes.

May she become a flourishing hidden tree,

That all her thoughts may like the linnet be,  
 And have no business but dispensing round  
 Their magnanimities of sound;  
 Nor but in merriment begin a chase,  
 Nor but in merriment a quarrel.  
 Oh, may she live like some green laurel  
 Rooted in one dear perpetual place.

My mind, because the minds that I have loved,  
 The sort of beauty that I have approved,  
 Prosper but little, has dried up of late,  
 Yet knows that to be choked with hate  
 May well be of all evil chances chief.  
 If there's no hatred in a mind  
 Assault and battery of the wind  
 Can never tear the linnet from the leaf.

An intellectual hatred is the worst,  
 So let her think opinions are accursed.  
 Have I not seen the loveliest woman born  
 Out of the mouth of Plenty's horn,  
 Because of her opinionated mind  
 Barter that horn and every good  
 By quiet natures understood  
 For an old bellows full of angry wind?

Considering that, all hatred driven hence,  
 The soul recovers radical innocence  
 And learns at last that it is self-delighting,  
 Self-appeasing, self-affrighting,  
 And that its own sweet will is heaven's will,  
 She can, though every face should scowl  
 And every windy quarter howl  
 Or every bellows burst, be happy still.

And may her bridegroom bring her to a house



Where all's accustomed, ceremonious;  
 For arrogance and hatred are the wares  
 Peddled in the thoroughfares.  
 How but in custom and in ceremony  
 Are innocence and beauty born?  
 Ceremony's a name for the rich horn,  
 And custom for the spreading laurel tree.

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Source: *Poetry* (November 1919).

## 7. T. S. Eliot

### (a) Love Song of Alfred J Prufrock

*S'io credesse che mia risposta fosse  
 A persona che mai tornasse al mondo,  
 Questa fiamma staria senza piu scosse.  
 Ma perciocche giammai di questo fondo  
 Non torno vivo alcun, s'i'odo il vero,  
 Senza tema d'infamia ti rispondo.*

Let us go then, you and I,  
 When the evening is spread out against the sky  
 Like a patient etherized upon a table;  
 Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,  
 The muttering retreats  
 Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels  
 And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:  
 Streets that follow like a tedious argument  
 Of insidious intent  
 To lead you to an overwhelming question ...  
 Oh, do not ask, "What is it?"  
 Let us go and make our visit.

In the room the women come and go  
 Talking of Michelangelo.

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,  
 The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes,  
 Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,  
 Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,  
 Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,  
 Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,  
 And seeing that it was a soft October night,  
 Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.

And indeed there will be time  
 For the yellow smoke that slides along the street,  
 Rubbing its back upon the window-panes;  
 There will be time, there will be time  
 To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet;  
 There will be time to murder and create,  
 And time for all the works and days of hands  
 That lift and drop a question on your plate;  
 Time for you and time for me,  
 And time yet for a hundred indecisions,  
 And for a hundred visions and revisions,  
 Before the taking of a toast and tea.

In the room the women come and go  
 Talking of Michelangelo.

And indeed there will be time  
 To wonder, "Do I dare?" and, "Do I dare?"  
 Time to turn back and descend the stair,  
 With a bald spot in the middle of my hair —  
 (They will say: "How his hair is growing thin!")  
 My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the chin,  
 My necktie rich and modest, but asserted by a simple pin —  
 (They will say: "But how his arms and legs are thin!")  
 Do I dare  
 Disturb the universe?

In a minute there is time  
 For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.

For I have known them all already, known them all:  
 Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons,  
 I have measured out my life with coffee spoons;  
 I know the voices dying with a dying fall  
 Beneath the music from a farther room.

So how should I presume?

And I have known the eyes already, known them all—  
 The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase,  
 And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin,  
 When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall,  
 Then how should I begin  
 To spit out all the butt-ends of my days and ways?

And how should I presume?

And I have known the arms already, known them all—  
 Arms that are braceleted and white and bare  
 (But in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair!)  
 Is it perfume from a dress  
 That makes me so digress?  
 Arms that lie along a table, or wrap about a shawl.

And should I then presume?

And how should I begin?

Shall I say, I have gone at dusk through narrow streets  
 And watched the smoke that rises from the pipes  
 Of lonely men in shirt-sleeves, leaning out of windows? ...

I should have been a pair of ragged claws  
 Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.

And the afternoon, the evening, sleeps so peacefully!  
 Smoothed by long fingers,

Asleep ... tired ... or it malingers,  
 Stretched on the floor, here beside you and me.  
 Should I, after tea and cakes and ices,  
 Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis?  
 But though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed,  
 Though I have seen my head (grown slightly bald) brought in upon a platter,  
 I am no prophet — and here's no great matter;  
 I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker,  
 And I have seen the eternal Footman hold my coat, and snicker,  
 And in short, I was afraid.

And would it have been worth it, after all,  
 After the cups, the marmalade, the tea,  
 Among the porcelain, among some talk of you and me,  
 Would it have been worth while,  
 To have bitten off the matter with a smile,  
 To have squeezed the universe into a ball  
 To roll it towards some overwhelming question,  
 To say: "I am Lazarus, come from the dead,  
 Come back to tell you all, I shall tell you all"—  
 If one, settling a pillow by her head  
     Should say: "That is not what I meant at all;  
     That is not it, at all."

And would it have been worth it, after all,  
 Would it have been worth while,  
 After the sunsets and the dooryards and the sprinkled streets,  
 After the novels, after the teacups, after the skirts that trail along the floor—  
 And this, and so much more?—  
 It is impossible to say just what I mean!  
 But as if a magic lantern threw the nerves in patterns on a screen:  
 Would it have been worth while  
 If one, settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl,  
 And turning toward the window, should say:  
     "That is not it at all,  
     That is not what I meant, at all."

No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;  
 Am an attendant lord, one that will do  
 To swell a progress, start a scene or two,  
 Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool,  
 Deferential, glad to be of use,  
 Politic, cautious, and meticulous;  
 Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;  
 At times, indeed, almost ridiculous—  
 Almost, at times, the Fool.

I grow old ... I grow old ...  
 I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled.

Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach?  
 I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk upon the beach.  
 I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.

I do not think that they will sing to me.

I have seen them riding seaward on the waves  
 Combing the white hair of the waves blown back  
 When the wind blows the water white and black.  
 We have lingered in the chambers of the sea  
 By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown  
 Till human voices wake us, and we drown.

Source: *Poetry* (June 1915).

## 8. W. H. Auden:

### (a) In Memory of W. B. Yeats

He disappeared in the dead of winter:  
 The brooks were frozen, the airports almost deserted,  
 And snow disfigured the public statues;  
 The mercury sank in the mouth of the dying day.

What instruments we have agree  
 The day of his death was a dark cold day.

Far from his illness  
 The wolves ran on through the evergreen forests,  
 The peasant river was untempted by the fashionable quays;  
 By mourning tongues  
 The death of the poet was kept from his poems.

But for him it was his last afternoon as himself,  
 An afternoon of nurses and rumours;  
 The provinces of his body revolted,  
 The squares of his mind were empty,  
 Silence invaded the suburbs,  
 The current of his feeling failed; he became his admirers.

Now he is scattered among a hundred cities  
 And wholly given over to unfamiliar affections,  
 To find his happiness in another kind of wood  
 And be punished under a foreign code of conscience.  
 The words of a dead man  
 Are modified in the guts of the living.

But in the importance and noise of to-morrow  
 When the brokers are roaring like beasts on the floor of the  
     Bourse,  
 And the poor have the sufferings to which they are fairly  
     accustomed,  
 And each in the cell of himself is almost convinced of his  
     freedom,  
 A few thousand will think of this day  
 As one thinks of a day when one did something slightly unusual.

What instruments we have agree  
 The day of his death was a dark cold day.

II

You were silly like us; your gift survived it all:

The parish of rich women, physical decay,

Yourself. Mad Ireland hurt you into poetry.

Now Ireland has her madness and her weather still,

For poetry makes nothing happen: it survives

In the valley of its making where executives

Would never want to tamper, flows on south

From ranches of isolation and the busy griefs,

Raw towns that we believe and die in; it survives,

A way of happening, a mouth.

III

Earth, receive an honoured guest:

William Yeats is laid to rest.

Let the Irish vessel lie

Emptied of its poetry.

In the nightmare of the dark

All the dogs of Europe bark,

And the living nations wait,

Each sequestered in its hate;

Intellectual disgrace

Stares from every human face,

And the seas of pity lie

Locked and frozen in each eye.

Follow, poet, follow right

To the bottom of the night,

With your unconstraining voice

Still persuade us to rejoice;

With the farming of a verse

Make a vineyard of the curse,

Sing of human unsuccess

In a rapture of distress;

In the deserts of the heart



Let the healing fountain start,  
 In the prison of his days  
 Teach the free man how to praise.

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## 9. Adil Jussawala

### (a) *Sea Breeze, Bombay*

Partition's people stitched  
 Shrouds from a flag, gentlemen scissored Sind.  
 An opened people, fraying across the cut  
 country reknotted themselves on this island.

Surrogate city of banks,  
 Brokering and bays, refugees' harbour and port,  
 Gatherer of ends whose brick beginnings work  
 Loose like a skin, spotting the coast,

Restore us to fire. New refugees,  
 Wearing blood-red wool in the worst heat,  
 come from Tibet, scanning the sea from the north,  
 Dazed, holes in their cracked feet.

Restore us to fire. Still,  
 Communities tear and re-form; and still, a breeze,  
 Cooling our garrulous evenings, investigates nothing,  
 Ruffles no tempers, uncovers no root,

And settles no one adrift of the mainland's histories.

*Oxford Anthology of Modern Indian Poetry.*

## 10. Kamala Das

### An Introduction

I don't know politics but I know the names  
 Of those in power, and can repeat them like  
 Days of week, or names of months, beginning with Nehru.  
 I am Indian, very brown, born in Malabar,  
 I speak three languages, write in  
 Two, dream in one.  
 Don't write in English, they said, English is  
 Not your mother-tongue. Why not leave  
 Me alone, critics, friends, visiting cousins,  
 Every one of you? Why not let me speak in  
 Any language I like? The language I speak,  
 Becomes mine, its distortions, its queernesses  
 All mine, mine alone.  
 It is half English, half Indian, funny perhaps, but it is honest,  
 It is as human as I am human, don't  
 You see? It voices my joys, my longings, my  
 Hopes, and it is useful to me as cawing  
 Is to crows or roaring to the lions, it  
 Is human speech, the speech of the mind that is  
 Here and not there, a mind that sees and hears and  
 Is aware. Not the deaf, blind speech  
 Of trees in storm or of monsoon clouds or of rain or the  
 Incoherent mutterings of the blazing  
 Funeral pyre. I was child, and later they  
 Told me I grew, for I became tall, my limbs  
 Swelled and one or two places sprouted hair.  
 When I asked for love, not knowing what else to ask  
 For, he drew a youth of sixteen into the  
 Bedroom and closed the door, He did not beat me  
 But my sad woman-body felt so beaten.  
 The weight of my breasts and womb crushed me.  
 I shrank pitifully.  
 Then ... I wore a shirt and my  
 Brother's trousers, cut my hair short and ignored  
 My womanliness. Dress in sarees, be girl  
 Be wife, they said. Be embroiderer, be cook,  
 Be a quarreller with servants. Fit in. Oh,  
 Belong, cried the categorizers. Don't sit  
 On walls or peep in through our lace-draped windows.  
 Be Amy, or be Kamala. Or, better  
 Still, be Madhavikutty. It is time to  
 Choose a name, a role. Don't play pretending games.  
 Don't play at schizophrenia or be a  
 Nympho. Don't cry embarrassingly loud when  
 Jilted in love ... I met a man, loved him. Call  
 Him not by any name, he is every man  
 Who wants. a woman, just as I am every

Woman who seeks love. In him . . . the hungry haste  
 Of rivers, in me . . . the oceans' tireless  
 Waiting. Who are you, I ask each and everyone,  
 The answer is, it is I. Anywhere and,  
 Everywhere, I see the one who calls himself I  
 In this world, he is tightly packed like the  
 Sword in its sheath. It is I who drink lonely  
 Drinks at twelve, midnight, in hotels of strange towns,  
 It is I who laugh, it is I who make love  
 And then, feel shame, it is I who lie dying  
 With a rattle in my throat. I am sinner,  
 I am saint. I am the beloved and the  
 Betrayed. I have no joys that are not yours, no  
 Aches which are not yours. I too call myself I.

## 11. Keki N. Daruwalla

### (a) Ghagra in Spate

And every year  
 the Ghaghra changes course  
 turning over and over in her sleep.

In the afternoon she is a grey smudge  
 exploring a grey canvas.  
 When dusk reaches her  
 through an overhang of cloud  
 she is overstewed coffee.  
 At night she is a red weal  
 across the spine of the land.

Driving at dusk you wouldn't know  
 there's a flood 'on ',  
 the landscape is so superbly equipoised-  
 rice-shoots pricking through  
 a stretch of water and light  
 spiked shadows  
 inverted trees  
 kingfishers, gulls.  
 As twilight thins  
 the road is a black stretch  
 running between the stars.

And suddenly at night  
the north comes to the village  
riding on river-back.  
Twenty minutes of a nightmare spin  
and fear turns phantasmal  
as half a street goes  
churning in the river-belly.  
If only voices could light lamps!  
If only limbs could turn to rafted bamboo!

And through the village  
the Ghaghra steers her course;  
thatch and dung-cakes turn to river-scum,  
a buffalo floats over to the rooftop  
where the men are stranded.  
Three days of hunger, and her udders  
turn red-rimmed and swollen  
with milk-extortion.

Children have spirit enough in them  
to cheer the rescue boats;  
the men are still-life subjects  
oozing wet looks.  
They don't rave or curse  
for they know the river's slang, her argot.  
No one sends up prayers to a wasted sky,  
for prayers are parabolic  
they will come down with a flop anyway.  
Instead there's a slush-stampede  
outside the booth  
where they are doling out salt and grain.

Ten miles to her flank  
peasants go fishing in rice fields  
and women in chauffeur-driven cars  
go looking for driftwood.  
But it's when she recedes  
that the Ghaghra turns bitchy  
sucking with animal-heat,  
cross-eddies diving like frogmen  
and sawing away the waterfront  
in a paranoid frenzy.  
She flees from the scene of her own havoc  
thrashing with pain.

Behind her the land sinks  
houses sag on to their knees  
in a farewell obeisance.  
And miles to the flank, the paddy fields  
will hoard the fish  
till the mud enters into  
a conspiracy with the sun  
and strangles them.

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