



1 Write a critical commentary on the following poem by Dom Moraes (published in 2001).

*Gondwana Rocks*

Heavy the climbing wind, burdened with coming rain. At the road's edge are black stands of conifer. Above, anarchic rocks, grotesque in disarray, left by a continent which slowly disappeared; scoured and depleted by a hundred million rains.	5          10
They stand in silhouette above the wind-warped pines, more corpsed with memories than ruins which castles leave. Though they have stood much wear, have endured more than grief and survived more than war, these rocks now bear no runes <sup>1</sup> more than those worked by wind, great shifts of earth, and rains.	15          20
But these gnarled outcrops are connections with what is. The cold salacities <sup>2</sup> of night, day's fall and flare, unending cycles, pass at the same charted <sup>3</sup> pace. Forest on forest dies at charted pace, beneath the scarred rocks which maintain a stillness not of death.	25          30
The constant wheel of stars turns over them in time. Glaciers, tidal waves, sandstorms and human hands have paused on them, then passed. Ghosts follow other ghosts up climbing stairs of wind, across black stands of pine to the last source of loss: the rocks, the coming rain.	35          40

<sup>1</sup> *runes*: ancient writings

<sup>2</sup> *salacities*: immoral behaviours

<sup>3</sup> *charted*: mapped and measured

**Turn to page 4 for Question 2**

- 2 Write a critical commentary on the following extract from the play, *The Matchmaker* (1954) by Thornton Wilder.

Mr Vandergelder is having a hair cut and a shave by Joe Scanlon. Ambrose Kemper wishes to marry Ermengarde, Mr Vandergelder's niece.

*Vandergelder* [loudly]: I tell you for the hundredth time you will never marry my niece.

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*[Exit AMBROSE, to the street.]*

3 Write a critical commentary on the following poem by Vikram Seth (published in 1990).

*Suzhou Park*

Magnolia Trees float out their flowers,  
 Vast, soft, upon a rubbish heap.  
 The grandfather sits still for hours:  
 His lap-held grandson is asleep.  
 Above him plane trees<sup>1</sup> fan the sky. 5  
 Nearby, a man in muted dance  
 Does tai-qi-quan.<sup>2</sup> A butterfly  
 Flies whitely past his easy trance.  
 A magpie flaps back to its pine.  
 A sparrow dust-rolls, fluffs, and cheeps. 10  
 The humans rest in a design:  
 One writes, one thinks, one moves, one sleeps.  
     The leaves trace out the stencilled stone,  
     And each is in his dream alone.

<sup>1</sup> *plane trees*: a type of broad-leaved tree

<sup>2</sup> *tai-qi-quan*: a slow-moving Chinese exercise



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