

國 立 清 華 大 學 命 題 紙

98 學年度 _____ 外國語文學 _____ 系 (所) _____ 甲 _____ 組碩士班入學考試

科目 _____ 美國文學史 _____ 科目代碼 _____ 3802 _____ 共 _____ 2 _____ 頁第 _____ 1 _____ 頁 *請在【答案卷卡】內作答

GRADUATE ADMISSIONS TEST FOR AMERICAN LITERATURE

PART I: Identifications (24%)

Please identify **the author** of the following quotations from the pool of names below:

Jack London, W. E. B. Du Bois, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, Carlos Bulosan, Thomas Jefferson

1. Standing on the bare ground, —my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space, —all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eye-ball. I am nothing. I see all. The currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part and particle of God.
2. We hold these truths to be self evident: that all man are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with inherent and inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, government are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.
3. Whatever it is, it avails not—distance avails not, and place avails not, / I too lived, Brooklyn of ample hills was mine, / I too walk'd the streets of Manhattan island, and bathed in the waters around it.
4. He would kill the dog and bury his hands in the warm body until the numbness went out of them. Then he could build another fire.
5. And he died. But at least he received his most cherished dream: American citizenship. He did realize later that he had become an American before he received his papers, when he began to think and write lovingly about *our* America. He gave up many things, and finally his own life, to realize his dream.
6. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity.

PART II: Essay Questions (60%)

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

1. Imagine that you are about to take a graduate seminar in American literary classics, how would you like the syllabus to look like? That is, what authors and texts do you think should be taught in a graduate seminar on American literary classics? Please name at least **FOUR** texts and/or authors, and explain why you think they should be considered "American literary classics," and how you would like them to be taught? If you prefer, you can write up a syllabus (with a course title, a course description, and a list of required reading) in the place of an answer.

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2. In *Invisible Man*, African American writer Ralph Ellison wrote down what his father told him on his deathbed:

Son, after I'm gone I want you to keep up the good fight. I never told you, but our life is a war and I have been a traitor back in the Reconstruction. Live with your head in the lion's mouth. I want you to overcome 'em with yeses, undermine 'em with grins, agree 'em to death and destruction, let 'em swoller you till they vomit or bust wide open.

Ralph Ellison is describing here a strange paradox of African American existence. Considering the context in which Ellison wrote *Invisible Man* as a critique of US racism that has domesticated blacks to complete compliance, in your opinion, why does Ellison's father tell Ellison that their life is a war, that they live in the lion's mouth, and that their overcoming hinges on a treacherous compliance to make the white vomit or bust wide open. What do these metaphors suggest and how would you interpret this paradoxical paragraph as a statement of the black experience in America? Does it contain some kind of "double consciousness" that W. E. B. Du Bois described in *The Souls of Black Folk*?

PART III: Statement of Purpose (16%)

Please identify a **theme**, **subject**, and/or **problematic** in American literary studies that you would like to pursue and research on, if you were admitted into our graduate program. Please explain why you are interested in this particular topic and how you plan to study it. Feel free to draw on any literary and cultural knowledge you have and try to articulate a feasible project as clearly and cogently as possible. Please imagine your answer as a research that outlines a future critical project on American literary and cultural studies.