

Zulfikar Ghose
Decomposition
More challenging questions!

Worksheet by:
Keith Tankard
Knowledge4Africa.com

1. "I have a picture I took in Bombay
of a beggar asleep on the pavement:
grey-haired, wearing shorts and a dirty shirt,
his shadow thrown aside like a blanket."
 - Is there any significance to the fact that the sleeping man is wearing shorts? (4)
 - Comment on the image "his shadow thrown aside like a blanket". (4)

2. "His arms and legs could be cracks in the stone
routes for the ants' journeys, the flies' descents.
Brain-washed by the sun into exhaustion,
he lies veined into stone, a fossil man."
 - Why does the poet say that the beggar's arms and legs "could be cracks in the stone"? (2)
 - In what way is the beggar lying "veined into stone". (2)

3. "His arms and legs could be cracks in the stone
routes for the ants' journeys, the flies' descents.
Brain-washed by the sun into exhaustion,
he lies veined into stone, a fossil man."
 - Why would he be called "a fossil man"? (4)
 - Comment on the word-usage in "Brain-washed by the sun into exhaustion". (4)

4. "Behind him, there is a crowd passingly
bemused by a pavement trickster and quite
indifferent to this very common sight
of an old man asleep on the pavement."
 - Comment on the indifference of the people. (4)

5. "I thought it then a good composition
and glibly called it The Man in the Street,
remarking how typical it was of
India that the man in the street lived there."
 - Why does the poet use the term "glibly" (4)
 - Is there anything wrong with the title "The Man in the Street"? (4)

6. "His head in the posture of one weeping
into a pillow chides me now for my
presumption at attempting to compose
art out of his hunger and solitude."
 - Why does the poet speak about his "presumption" at attempting "to compose art out of his hunger and solitude"? (4)

7. Is the poet correct in believing that one should not make art out of poverty and suffering? (10)

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