

## PRÉCIS

## Central Superior Services Examination (CSS) 1971

**Passage.**

The essence of poetry is that it deals with events which concern a large number of people and can be grasped not as immediate personal experience but as matter known largely from heresy and presented in simplified and often abstract forms. It is thus the antithesis of all poetry which deals with the special, individual activity of the self and tries to present this as specially and as individually as it can. The poet who deals with public themes may himself be affected, even deeply, by contemporary events at some point in his own being, but to see them in their breadth and depth he must rely largely on what he hears from other men and from mass instruments of communication. From the start his impulse to write about them is different from any impulse to write about his own affairs. It may be just as strong and just as compelling, but it is not of the same kind. He has to give his own version of something which millions of others may share with him, and however individual he may wish to be, he cannot avoid relying to a large extent on much that he knows only from second hand.

Fundamentally this may not matter, for after all what else did Shakespeare do: but the Political poet does not construct an imaginary past, he attempts to grasp and interpret a vast present. Between him and his subject there is a gap which he can never completely cross, and all his attempts to make events part of himself must be to some extent hampered by recalcitrant elements in them, which he does not understand or cannot assimilate or find irrelevant to his creative task. In such poetry selection which is indispensable to all art, has to be made from an unusually large field of possibilities and guided by an exacting sense of what really matters and what does not. On one side he may try to include too much and lose himself in issues where he is not imaginatively at home, on the other side he may see some huge event merely from a private angle which need not mean much to others. Political poetry oscillates between these extremes, and its history in our time has been largely attempts to make the best of one or the other of them or to see what compromises can be made between them.



Title

The essence of  
political poetry

Preurs

The soul of poetry is that it deals with the matters that affect masses.

The knowledge of such matters is generally not direct. A poet

indulged in such poetry may be at one point

affected by these current matters. A

poet's desire to



write about public  
issues differ from the  
one to write about  
~~times~~ himself. However,  
these may be equal  
in strength. Absolute  
individuality is not  
possible in political  
poetry as general public  
forms its knowledge  
base. Some elements in  
these events prevent  
them from becoming  
exclusive part of poet.  
From the vast sea of  
knowledge for such  
poetry, poet has to



make careful selection.

This is because  
~~addition~~ adding too much  
from this knowledge  
pool can kill individuality  
and vice versa. This  
has been observed  
throughout the history.

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