



OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL
ACADEMICS, RESEARCH AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS

2020/2021 ACADEMIC YEAR

FOURTH YEAR SECOND SEMESTER REGULAR EXAMINATION

FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF EDUCATION (Arts)

COURSE CODE: LIT 420

COURSE TITLE: MODERN AFRICAN POETRY

DATE: 13TH JULY, 2021

TIME: 8:00AM – 11:00AM

INSTRUCTION TO CANDIDATES

- SEE INSIDE

THIS PAPER CONSISTS OF FIVE PRINTED PAGES

PLEASE TURN OVER

LIT 420: MODERN AFRICAN POETRY

STREAM: BED (Arts)

DURATION: 3 Hours

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- i. Answer Question ONE and any other TWO questions.*
- ii. Do not write on the question paper.*
- iii. Avoid using the same text to answer more than one question*

Question One

- a. Explain what would be considered as Modern African Poetry. (3Marks)
- b. In the criticism of Modern African Poetry, there are three categories of ideology which are crucial. Explain these ideologies. (9 Marks)
- c. Discuss the African experiences that have helped shape the thematic and stylistic trends in Modern African Poetry under the following: (18 Marks)
 - i. Negritude poetry
 - ii. Lusophone poetry
 - iii. Anglophone poetry

Question Two

Read the poem below and analyze the poet's presentation of negritudism. (20 Marks)

AFRICA BY David Diop

Africa my Africa

Africa of proud warriors in ancestral savannahs

Africa of whom my grandmother sings

On the banks of the distant river

I have never known you

But your blood flows in my veins

Your beautiful black blood that irrigates the fields

The blood of your sweat

The sweat of your slavery

Africa, tell me Africa

Is this your back that is unbent

This back that never breaks under the weight of humiliation

The back trembling with red scars

And saying no to the whip under the midday sun

But a grave voice answers me

Impetuous child that tree, young and strong

That tree over there

Splendidly alone midst white and faded flowers

That is your Africa springing up a new

Springing up patiently, obstinately

Whose fruit bit by bit acquires

The bitter taste of liberty

Question Three

'Lusophone poets are concerned about depicting the struggle of black people in concrete terms as opposed abstract'. Read the following poem *Black Mother* by Virato da Cruz and analyze the poet's presentation of the struggle of black people. (20 Marks)

BLACK MOTHER

Your presence, mother, is the living drama of a race

Drama of flesh and blood

Which life has written with the pen of centuries...

Through your eyes, mother

I see oceans of grief

Lit by setting sun, landscapes,

Violet landscapes

Dramas of Cain and Japheth

But I see as well (oh if I see)

I see as well how the light robbed from your eyes now glows

Demoniacal temptress – like certainty

Glittering steadily – like Hope in us,

Your other sons making, forming, announcing

The day of humanity

THE DAY OF HUMANITY

Question Four

Anglophone poetry presents cultural and psychological disorientation of an individual as a result of estrangement and alienation caused by colonization. The poets use personal and complex images and symbols that reflect on the cultural, social, economic, intellectual and political life of the African people. With this in mind, identify and explain the images and symbols used by Wole Soyinka in the poem below to bring out social cultural issues that affect Africans: (20 Marks)

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

The price seemed reasonable, location

Indifferent. The landlady swore she lived

Off premises. Nothing remained

But self-confession. "Madam," I warned,

"I hate a wasted journey--I am African."

Silence. Silenced transmission of

Pressurized good-breeding. Voice, when it came,

Lipstick coated, long gold-rolled

Cigarette-holder pipped. Caught I was foully.

"HOW DARK?" . . . I had not misheard . . . "ARE YOU LIGHT

OR VERY DARK?" Button B, Button A.* Stench

Of rancid breath of public hide-and-speak.

Red booth. Red pillar box. Red double-tiered

Omnibus squelching tar. It *was* real! Shamed

By ill-mannered silence, surrender

Pushed dumbfounded to beg simplification.

Considerate she was, varying the emphasis--
 "ARE YOU DARK? OR VERY LIGHT?" Revelation came.
 "You mean--like plain or milk chocolate?"
 Her assent was clinical, crushing in its light
 Impersonality. Rapidly, wave-length adjusted,
 I chose. "West African sepia"--and as afterthought,
 "Down in my passport." Silence for spectroscopic
 Flight of fancy, till truthfulness clanged her accent
 Hard on the mouthpiece. "WHAT'S THAT?" conceding
 "DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT IS." "Like brunette."
 "THAT'S DARK, ISN'T IT?" "Not altogether.
 Facially, I am brunette, but, madam, you should see
 The rest of me. Palm of my hand, soles of my feet
 Are a peroxide blond. Friction, caused--
 Foolishly, madam--by sitting down, has turned
 My bottom raven black--One moment, madam!"--sensing
 Her receiver rearing on the thunderclap
 About my ears--"Madam," I pleaded, "wouldn't you rather
 See for yourself?"

Question Five

With reference to Okot P'Bitek's poetry that he titles as 'Songs', discuss his presentation of the evils of Post-Colonial African political scene. (20 Marks)