



(Knowledge for Development)

KIBABII UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS

**2021 / 2022 ACADEMIC YEAR
FOURTH YEAR SECOND SEMESTER**

MAIN EXAMINATION

- SCHOOL BASED -

**FOR THE DEGREE OF
BACHELOR OF EDUCATION (ARTS)**

COURSE CODE: LIT 413

COURSE TITLE: MODERN AFRICAN POETRY

DATE: 30TH AUGUST, 2022

TIME: 9.00 - 11.00AM

INSTRUCTION TO CANDIDATES

Answer Question **ONE** and any other **TWO** Questions.

TIME: 2 Hours

This Paper Consists of 2 Printed Pages. Please Turn Over. ►

KIBU observes **ZERO** tolerance to examination cheating.

QUESTION ONE - COMPULSORY (30 MARKS)

- a) Using well-illustrated examples from any FOUR poets studied in this course, critically examine the historical factors that led to the growth of Modern African poetry. (20 marks)
- b) In what ways has the poetry from Africa been influenced by the western tradition. (10 marks)

QUESTION TWO (20 MARKS)

- a) Explain why Okot p'Bitek's *Song of Lawino* marks a crucial stage in the development of East African poetry. (10 marks)
- b) Discuss Alienation as a theme in *Song of Lawino*. (10 marks)

QUESTION THREE (20 MARKS)

Critically evaluate FIVE distinctive features of South African Poetry. Use illustrations from poems by South African writers you have covered in this course.

QUESTION FOUR (20 MARKS)

Discuss the major styles and themes in Modern African Poetry. Illustrate your answer with examples from *When Bullets Begin to Flower* by Margaret Dickinson.

QUESTION FIVE (20 MARKS)

Read the following poem and answer the questions after it:

LETTER FROM A CONTRACT WORKER

I wanted to write you a letter
my love,
a letter that would tell
of this desire
to see you
of this fear
of losing you
of this more than benevolence that I feel
of this indefinable ill that pursues me
of this yearning to which I live in total surrender ...

I wanted to write you a letter
my love,
a letter of intimate secrets,
a letter of memories of you,
of you
of your lips red as henna
of your hair black as mud
of your eyes sweet as honey
of your breasts hard as wild orange

of your lynx gait
and of your caresses
such that I can find no better here ...

I wanted to write you a letter
my love,
that would recall the days in our haunts
our nights lost in the long grass
that would recall the shade falling on us from the plum
trees
the moon filtering through the endless palm trees
that would recall the madness
of our passion
and the bitterness
of our separation ...

I wanted to write you a letter
my love,
that you would not read without sighing
that you would hide from from papa Bombo
that you would withhold from mama Kieza
that you would reread without the coldness
of forgetting
a letter to which in all Kilombo
no other would stand comparison ...

I wanted to write you a letter
my love
a letter that would be brought to you by the passing wind
a letter that the cashews and coffee trees
the hyenas and buffaloes
the alligators and grayling
could understand
so that if the wind should lose it on the way
the beasts and plants
with pity for our sharp suffering
from song to song
lament to lament
gabble to gabble
would bring you pure and hot
the burning words
the sorrowful words of the letter
I wanted to write to you ...

I wanted to write you a letter ...
But oh my love, I cannot understand
why it is, why, why, why it is, my dear
that you cannot read
and I – Oh the hopelessness! – cannot write!

QUESTIONS:

- a) Explain how each of the stanzas relates to the title of the poem. (6 marks)
- b) Identify and explain the significance of any three sound patterns used in the poem. (6 marks)
- c) Discuss the subject matter of the poem. (4 marks)
- d) What do the following lines mean as used in the poem?
- i) that would recall the shade falling on us from the plum trees. (2 marks)
- ii) why it is, why, why, why it is, my dear
that you cannot read
and I – Oh the hopelessness! – cannot write! (2 marks)