



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS 2016/2017

SECOND SEMESTER EXAMINATION FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS  
AND BACHELOR OF EDUCATION

ALT 303: THEORY AND HISTORY OF LITERATURE

DATE: Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2017

TIME: 11.00a.m-1.00p.m

INSTRUCTIONS:

Answer question ONE and any other two questions

1. To what extent is the argument that the history of literature is a history of mankind's attempt to understand the meaning and function of creative imagination true? Refer to at least two literary theories to illustrate your arguments. (26 marks)
2. Show how any two major concerns of Feminist Literary Theory can be used to discuss the predicaments of the principal female characters in ONE of the following texts.
  - i) Bessie Head's *A Question of Power* OR
  - ii) Mariama Ba's *So Long a letter* OR
  - iii) Nawal El Sadaawi's *God Dies by the Nile*. (22 marks)
3. a) Use three arguments of the psychoanalytic literary theory to analyse social relations in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. (22 marks)  
b) Using Freud's concept of "the unconscious" discuss the characters of Gregor, Greta and the father in Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. (22 marks)
4. a) Discuss both Marlow and Kurtz's expeditions in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* using postcolonial literary theory. (22 marks)  
OR  
b) Referring to an African novel you studied in this course, show in what way the statement "The Empire writes back" can be used to discuss its portrayal of imperialism. (22 marks)
5. a) Give a Marxist analysis of the symbolism of the road, theng'eta and Wanja brothel in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood*. (22 marks)

OR

- b) Discuss how any text studied in this course brings to the fore problems that are likely to exist when class stratification occurs in society. (22 marks)
6. a) What were the main concerns of Negritude literary movement? Illustrate your points using a poem influenced by the movement. (22 marks)

OR

- b) Explain the central tenets of deconstruction as a literary theory. Then attempt a deconstructive reading of the following poem. (20 marks)

THERE IS A GIRL INSIDE

BY

LUCILLE CLIFTON

There is a girl inside.

She is randy as a wolf.

She will not walk and leave these bones  
to an old woman

She is a green tree in a forest of kindling.

She is a green girl in a used poet.

She waited patient as a nun

For the second coming,

When she can break through gray hairs  
Into blossom

And her lovers will harvest

Honey and thyme

And the woods will be wild

With the damn wonder of it.