



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS 2013/2014

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

ALT 300: STYLISTICS AND LITERARY TECHNIQUES

DATE: Monday, 7th April, 2014

TIME: 2.00 p.m. – 4.00 p.m.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- a) Answer question **ONE** and **TWO** other questions.
- b) Avoid duplication of material.

SECTION A

1. COMPULSORY QUESTION

“What matters most in a work of Literature is the message. All other considerations are of relatively little importance”. From your experience in this course what is your opinion about this assertion? Illustrate your answer.

(30 marks)

2. Outline the techniques of Repetition and Parallelism in style, illustrating your answer amply. (20 marks)

3. What do you understand by imagery? To what extent can it be seen as a defining code of Literature? (20 marks)

4. Which phonological features in plays and poems are given prominence? (20 marks)

5. Discuss and illustrate four major aspects of Deviation in Stylistics. (20 marks)
6. Present a stylistic analysis of the following passage. (20 marks)

From Arrow of God by Chinua Achebe.

Obika's death shook Umuaro to the roots; a man like him did not come into the world too often. As for Ezeulu it was as though he had died.

Some people expected Ezidemili to be jubilant. Such people did not know him. He was not that kind of a man and besides he knew too well the danger of such exultation. All he was heard to say quietly was : 'This should teach him how far he could dare next time.'

But for Ezeulu there was no next time. Think of a man who, unlike lesser men, always goes to battle without a shield because he knows that bullets and matchet strokes will glance off his medicine-boiled skin; think of him discovering in the thick of battle that the power has suddenly, without warning, deserted him. What next time can there be? Will he say to the guns and the arrows and the matchets : *Hold ! I want to return quickly to my medicine-hut and stir the pot and find out what has gone wrong; perhaps someone in my household- a child, maybe - has unwittingly violated my medicine's taboo?* No.

Ezeulu sank to the ground in utter amazement. It was not simply the blow of Obika's death, great though it was. Men had taken greater blows : that was what made a man a man. For did they not say that a man is like a funeral ram which must take whatever beating comes to it without opening its mount; that the silent tremor of pain down its body alone must tell of its suffering?

At any other time Ezeulu would have been more than a match to his grief. He would have been equal to any pain not compounded with humiliation. But why, he asked himself again and again, why had Ulu chosen to deal thus with him, to strike him down and then cover him with mud? What was his offence? Had he not divined the god's will and obeyed it? When was it ever heard that a child was scalded by the piece of yam its own mother put in its palm? What man

would send his son with a potsherd to bring fire from a neighbour's hut and then unleash rain on him? Who ever sent his son up the palm to gather nuts and then took an axe and felled the tree? But today such a thing had happened before the eyes of all. What could it point to but the collapse and ruin of all things? Then a god, finding himself powerless, might take flight and in one final, backward glance at his abandoned worshippers cry:

If the rat cannot flee fast enough

Let him make way for the tortoise!

Perhaps it was the constant, futile throbbing of these thoughts that finally left a crack in Ezeulu's mind. Or perhaps his implacable assailant having stood over him for a little while stepped on him as on an insect and crushed him under the heel in the dust. But this final act of malevolence proved merciful. It allowed Ezeulu, in his last days, to live in the haughty splendour of a demented high priest and spared him knowledge of the final outcome.