



MACHAKOS UNIVERSITY

University Examinations 2021/2022

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS

THIRD-YEAR SECOND SEMESTER EXAMINATION FOR

BACHELOR OF ARTS

BACHELOR OF EDUCATION (ARTS)

REGULAR EXAMINATION

ALT 302: POETRY

Date:

Time:

INSTRUCTIONS

Answer Question One (Compulsory) and Any Other Two Questions

1. a) Examine similarities and differences between lyrics and ballads (10 Marks)

b) "In many cases, protest poetry is associated with dissatisfaction toward a specific governmental regime". Citing any examples discussed in class, discuss the validity of this statement. (20 Mark)

2. Drawing your examples from poems studied in class, explain features of an Epic poem (20 Marks)

3. Analyse ecological issues raised by the poet in the following poem. (20 Marks)

“Return to Being;” A poem by Nnimmo Bassey

The battle rages
Who must gobble up the carbon budget,
Wrap Mother Earth in endless bales of smog?
Whose task is to pile the climate debt
And whose lot to be the carbon slave?
Colonize the biosphere
Obliterate the ethnosphere
Hopes mapped in colonial geographies of death
Scarified for sport, booby-trapped and floating on blood

Burst the funeral drums,
Tighten the tourniquets on hard hearts ensconced in hard hats
Drain the pipelines of caked memories and know
Fancy names for deadly scourges never made them friendly
Not Ebola. Not novelty in novel coronavirus
What children have I spawned, Mother Earth groans
The commons enclosed, entrapped for delicate, bloodied trophy hunter
Civilized kids hooked on zoos incarcerate relatives for a touch of the wild
All game snatching bread from astonished mouths of orphans
Now all masked, suited and 7 billion jabs against zoonotic embraces.

Hear the footsteps from the receding market squares
Are you too far gone to hear?
Hear the rumblings of resistance to naked market forces
That roasted habitats and habitations
Lands, seas and skies grabbed yet dreams cannot be corralled ‘cause
Daughters of the soil are ever alert, awake, hoisting the sky
And its watery dusts
Knowledge demonized by demons of market environmentalism and brazen extractivism
As the hunter’s bag becomes a weapon of mass destruction
Bulging pockets hack horns and tusks and an array of idiotic aphrodisiacs for limp
brains
Slithering across the Savannah, stomping on our ancestral hearths
Shall we look, exiled, silent, sullen, sunk and annihilated as our trees metamorphose
into carbon sinks?

The dream is gone, the cock has crowed,
The betrayer seeks a branch to ape a pendulum swing
And one or two shed a tear for the press
As the hawk glides softly on the winds of the dirge seeking a hapless prey
Funeral drums burst by pulsating biceps of pain
Flutes whisper a dirge long forgotten suddenly emerging from the depths of years of
erased histories
As daughters and sons of the soil pick up pieces of sacred hills, rivers, forests

Mother Earth awakes, embraces her visible and invisible children
And finally humans return to being.

4 a) Explain the three types of sonnets. (10 Marks)

b) Read the following poem and answer questions which follow

The Eagle by Alfred Lord Tennyson

He clasps the crag with crooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ringed with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

- i. Highlight the form and structure of the poem above (5 Marks)
- ii. Identify the stanza that best expresses the controlling idea in “The Eagle”, validate your answer with lines from the poem. (5 Marks)

5. Identify FIVE stylistic devices used by the poet and explain their functions. (20 Marks)

Humming-Bird (1923) by D.H. Lawrence

I can imagine, in some other world
Primeval-dumb, far back
In that most awful stillness, that only gasped and hummed,
Humming-birds raced down the avenues.

Before anything had a soul,
While life was a heave of Matter, half inanimate,
This little bit chipped off in brilliance
And went whizzing through the slow, vast, succulent stems.

I believe there were no flowers, then,
In the world where the humming-bird flashed ahead of creation.
I believe he pierced the slow vegetable veins with his long beak.

Probably he was big
As mosses, and little lizards, they say were once big.
Probably he was a jabbing, terrifying monster.
We look at him through the wrong end of the long telescope of Time,
Luckily for us.

