



MACHAKOS UNIVERSITY

University Examinations for 2019/2020 Academic Year

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGES

DECEMBER SESSION EXAMINATION FOR

BACHELOR OF EDUCATION (ARTS)

BACHELOR OF ARTS

ALT 302: POETRY

DATE: SCHOOL BASED

TIME:

INSTRUCTIONS

Answer question ONE and other TWO questions in this paper

SECTION A: (COMPULSORY)

QUESTION ONE (30 MARKS)

- a) Define the term poetry. (5 marks)
- b) Write an essay on the Negritude poetry of Leopold Sedar Senghor overleaf. (25 marks)

SECTION B: ANSWER ANY TWO QUESTIONS

QUESTION TWO (20 MARKS)

Analyse the life and poetry of Dennis Brutus.

QUESTION THREE (20 MARKS)

In what ways does John Pepper Clarke address socio-political issues in his poetry?

QUESTION FOUR (20 MARKS)

Highlight one female African poet and show how her poetry differs from male African poets.

QUESTION FIVE (20 MARKS)

With insights from the poets studied in this class, show the significance of poetry.

The Poetry of Leopold Sedar Senghor

Black Woman

Naked woman, black woman

Clothed with your colour which is life,
with your form which is beauty!

In your shadow I have grown up; the
gentleness of your hands was laid over my eyes.

And now, high up on the sun-baked
pass, at the heart of summer, at the heart of noon,
I come upon you, my Promised Land,
And your beauty strikes me to the heart
like the flash of an eagle.

Naked woman, dark woman

Firm-fleshed ripe fruit, sombre raptures
of black wine, mouth making lyrical my mouth
Savannah stretching to clear horizons,
savannah shuddering beneath the East Wind's
eager caresses

Carved tom-tom, taut tom-tom, muttering
under the Conqueror's fingers

Your solemn contralto voice is the
spiritual song of the Beloved.

Naked woman, dark woman

Oil that no breath ruffles, calm oil on the
athlete's flanks, on the flanks of the Princes of Mali
Gazelle limbed in Paradise, pearls are stars on the
night of your skin

Delights of the mind, the glinting of red
gold against your watered skin

Under the shadow of your hair, my care
is lightened by the neighbouring suns of your eyes.

Naked woman, black woman,
I sing your beauty that passes, the form
that I fix in the Eternal,

Before jealous fate turn you to ashes to
feed the roots of life.

Night in Sine

Woman, place your soothing hands upon my brow,
Your hands softer than fur.
Above us balance the palm trees, barely rustling
In the night breeze. Not even a lullaby.
Let the rhythmic silence cradle us.
Listen to its song. Hear the beat of our dark blood,
Hear the deep pulse of Africa in the mist of lost villages.

Now sets the weary moon upon its slack seabed
Now the bursts of laughter quiet down, and even the storyteller
Nods his head like a child on his mother's back
The dancers' feet grow heavy, and heavy, too,
Come the alternating voices of singers.

Now the stars appear and the Night dreams
Leaning on that hill of clouds, dressed in its long, milky pagne.
The roofs of the huts shine tenderly. What are they saying
So secretly to the stars? Inside, the fire dies out
In the closeness of sour and sweet smells.

Woman, light the clear-oil lamp. Let the Ancestors
Speak around us as parents do when the children are in bed.
Let us listen to the voices of the Elissa Elders. Exiled like us
They did not want to die, or lose the flow of their semen in the sands.
Let me hear, a gleam of friendly souls visits the smoke-filled hut,
My head upon your breast as warm as tasty dang streaming from the fire,
Let me breathe the odor of our Dead, let me gather
And speak with their living voices, let me learn to live
Before plunging deeper than the diver
Into the great depths of sleep.

I will Pronounce Your Name

I will pronounce your name, Naett, I will declaim you, Naett!
Naett, your name is mild like cinnamon, it is the fragrance in which the lemon grove sleeps
Naett, your name is the sugared clarity of blooming coffee trees
And it resembles the savannah, that blossoms forth under the masculine ardour of the midday sun
Name of dew, fresher than shadows of tamarind,
Fresher even than the short dusk, when the heat of the day is silenced,

Naett, that is the dry tornado, the hard clap of lightning
Naett, coin of gold, shining coal, you my night, my sun! ...
I am you hero, and now I have become your sorcerer, in order to pronounce your names.
Princess of Elissa, banished from Futa on the fateful day.

In Memoriam

Today is Sunday.
I fear the crowd of my fellows with such faces of stone.
From my glass tower filled with headaches and impatient Ancestors,
I contemplate the roofs and hilltops in the mist.
In the stillness—somber, naked chimneys.
Below them my dead are asleep and my dreams turn to ashes.
All my dreams, blood running freely down the streets
And mixing with blood from the butcher shops.
From this observatory like the outskirts of town
I contemplate my dreams lost along the streets,
Crouched at the foot of the hills like the guides of my race
On the rivers of the Gambia and the Saloum
And now on the Seine at the foot of these hills.
Let me remember my dead!
Yesterday was All Saints' Day, the solemn anniversary of the Sun,
And I had no dead to honor in any cemetery.
O Forefathers! You who have always refused to die,
Who knew how to resist Death from the Sine to the Seine,
And now in the fragile veins of my indomitable blood,
Guard my dreams as you did your thin-legged migrant sons!
O Ancestors! Defend the roofs of Paris in this dominical fog,
The roofs that protect my dead.
Let me leave this tower so dangerously secure
And descend to the streets, joining my brothers
Who have blue eyes and hard hands.