



UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS

1ST SEMESTER 2023/2024 ACADEMIC YEAR

**FOURTH YEAR EXAMINATION FOR THE DEGREE OF
BACHELOR OF EDUCATION ARTS**

LITT 411: POETRY FROM WEST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

STREAM: R

TIME: 2 HRS

DAY: WEDNESDAY (8.30-10.30AM)

DATE: 6/12/23

THIS QUESTION PAPER CONSISTS OF FOUR (4) PAGES

PLEASE DO NOT OPEN UNTIL THE INVIGILATOR SAYS SO.

INSTRUCTIONS: Answer questions **ONE (COMPULSORY)** and **ONE** question from each section

QUESTION ONE (30 MARKS)

- (a) How is modern African poetry different from traditional African poetry (5mks)
- (b) Outline at least five roles the Negritude movement played in the development of West African poetry (10mks)
- (c) “Poetry captures the collective experience of the society that a poet writes about”. Discuss the veracity of this statement citing any **five** themes found in West and Southern African poetry. Use illustrations from both West and Southern Africa poets (15mks)

SECTION A: WEST AFRICAN POETRY

QUESTION TWO (20 MARKS)

“**Christopher Okgibo** was one of the most promising poets to emerge from West Africa and his poetry is regarded as being metaphysical and religious”

- a) Discuss the validity of the above statement with illustrations from one of his poem provided below (10mks)
- b). From the poem, why is the persona referring to himself as a prodigal (5mks)
- c). How relevant is the poem’s title (5mks)

THE PASSAGE By Christopher okgibo

BEFORE YOU, my mother Idoto,
Naked I stand;
Before your weary presence,
A prodigal

Leaning on an oilbean,
Lost in your legend
Under your power wait I
On barefoot,
Watchman for the watchword
At Heavensgate;



Out of the depth my cry:
Give ear and hearken...

DARK WATERS of the beginning.

Ray, violet, and short, piercing the gloom,
Foreshadow the fire that is dreamed of.

Rainbow on far side, arched like boa bent to kill,
Foreshadow the fire that is dreamed of.

Me to the orangery
Solitude invites,
A wagtail, to tell
The tangled-wood-tale;
A sunbird, to mourn
A mother on spray.

Rain and sun in single combat;
On one leg standing,
In silence at the passage
The young bird at the passage

SILENCE FACES at crossroads:
Festivity in black...

Faces of black like black
Column of ants,

Behind the bell tower,
Into the hot garden
Where all roads meet:
Festivity in black...

O Anan at the knob of the panel oblong,
Hear us at crossroads at the great hinges

Where the players of loft organ
Rehearse old lovely fragment, alone-

Strains of pressed orange leaves on pages
Bleach of the light of years held in leather:

For we are listening in cornfields

Among the windplayers,
Listening to the wind leaning over
Its loveliest fragment...

QUESTION THREE (20 MARKS)

“Poetry is a tool for resistance” Using Leopold Sedar Senghor poem *Prayer for Peace* Discuss the poem in light of this statement (20mks)

SECTION B: SOUTHERN AFRICAN POETRY

QUESTION FOUR (20 MARKS)

Focusing on the experience of apartheid in South Africa, discuss ways through which South African poets responded to “Apartheid situation”. (20marks)

QUESTION FIVE (20 MARKS)

In Mozambique and Angola poetry was often used as a weapon against oppression.” Discuss using examples from the works of poets you have studied. (20mks)

