

LIT 300: ADVANCED LITERARY THEORY AND APPLICATION – MARKING GUIDE [SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMS]

1. a) Explain the meaning and relevance of the following terms commonly used in literature: (9 marks)

i) *Literary theory- the set of general principles used to analyze literary works; used in practical criticism and creative writing -(3 marks)

ii) *Theoretical and practical criticism

*Theoretical criticism – makes general statements on literary forms, genres, structures, techniques, styles, literary movements, etc.; develops the hypothesis about the nature and function of literature and about the general principles that underline the achievement of art and literature; also called literary theory

– (3 marks).

*Practical criticism – also called interpretive criticism; refers to examination of actual work of art and may involve – observation, classification, analysis, close reading, determination of historical or social qualities, inter-textuality –(3 marks)

b) Using any of the following theoretical approach(es) you think most appropriate, attempt an analysis of any **ONE** of the following books: (16 marks)

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|---|-----------------|
| i) <i>Things Fall Apart</i> (1958) | - Chinua Achebe |
| ii) <i>Three Days on the Cross</i> (1991) | - Wahome Mutahi |
| iii) <i>Dar es Salaam by Night</i> (1999) | - Ben Mtobwa |

*Marks to be distributed as:

- Usage of theoretical approach (es) - (12 marks)

- General presentation - (3 marks)

2. a) What are some of the qualities of a good literary critic? (5 marks)

*Qualities of a good critic:

-Should not be biased - (1 mark)

-Have sound understanding of literary theories - (1 mark)

-Must be creative while undertaking criticism - (1 mark)

-Well versed with whatever he/she is criticizing - (1 mark)

-He/she out to understand there is no criticism that is final and thus be will to accommodate other criticisms - (1 mark)

- b) Make a comparative study of any **TWO** of the following identity theories: (10 marks)

- i) Feminist theory
 - ii) Queer theory
 - iii) Postcolonial theory
 - iv) Marxist theory

*Candidates to be awarded 5 marks per theory.

3. Evaluate the major principles by any **ONE** of the following theories: (15 marks)

i) Existentialist theory	iv) Postmodernism
ii) Realist theory	v) Structuralism
iii) New Criticism	vi) Formalism

*Candidates to discuss the major principles in relation to the study of literature.

4. a) Discuss some of the assumptions shared by different branches of feminist literary theorists. (5 marks)

*The assumptions include:

-They all agree that hierarchically ordered male-female gender relations impacts all aspects of human social existence by establishing a series of binarisms - (1 mark)

-Advocates for alternative models of reading and writing - (1 mark)

-They examine the social, economic and cultural aspects of literary works, but especially what those works reveal about the role, position and influence of women -(1 mark)

-Operates on a number of tenets: that society is phallocentric; criteria for analyzing works of art heavily infused with masculine assumptions; patriarchal ideology pervades writings which have been considered great, etc. - (2 marks)

- b) Show how deconstructionists go about their critical projects? (10 marks)

*Deconstructionists believe that:

-Literary works are made up of gaps - (1 mark)

- Literary works are complex and full of contradictions - (1 mark)

-Work on the principle of subversion of certain notions - (1 mark)

-A critic must read the entire book (structure) in order to understand it fully - (1 mark)

-They do not advocate for extra-textual readings - (1 mark)

- They believe on inter-textuality - (1 mark)
 - That texts have multiple meanings - (1 mark)
5. How successful has Mariama Ba utilized the theories of feminism, deconstruction and structuralism in *So Long a Letter* (1981)? (15 marks)

*Marks to be awarded as:

- Usage of feminism - (5 marks)
 - Deconstruction - (5 marks)
 - Structuralism - (5 marks)
6. According to Wimsatt and Beardsley, the words on the page were all that mattered; importation of meaning from outside the text was quite irrelevant." In reference to New Criticism and selected theoretical approach (es), explain the relevance of this statement. - (15 marks)
- *Candidates to refer to any of the theories that do not advocate for extra-textual reading of texts, namely: deconstruction, new criticism, etc. (15 marks)
7. Using any of theoretical approaches you think most appropriate, attempt an analysis of the following piece of writing titled "The Death of my Father" by Dr. Henry Indangazi. (15 marks)

*Candidates are expected to discuss the following:

- Style and form of the poem in relation to meaning - (5 marks)
- Content/thematic issues - (5 marks)
- Meaning of the poem - (5 marks)

END