



# MACHAKOS UNIVERSITY

University Examinations 2020/2021

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGES

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION FOR DEGREE IN

BACHELOR OF EDUCATION (ARTS) / BA ARTS

**ALT303: THEORY & HISTORY OF LITERATURE**

**Date:**

**Time:**

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## **INSTRUCTIONS**

*This paper consists of **FIVE** questions*

*Answer question **ONE** and other **TWO** questions in this paper*

Section A: (Compulsory)

1. a) Briefly describe what a literary theory is. (5 marks)
- b) With the help of a text, explain why theory is important in literary analysis. (10 marks)
- c) Describe the key features of formalist theory and illustrate how you can apply them to analyse the following poem. (15 marks)

**If We Must Die** by Claude McKay

If we must die, let it not be like hogs  
Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,  
While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs,  
Making their mock at our accursèd lot.  
If we must die, O let us nobly die,  
So that our precious blood may not be shed  
In vain; then even the monsters we defy  
Shall be constrained to honor us though dead!  
O kinsmen! we must meet the common foe!  
Though far outnumbered let us show us brave,  
And for their thousand blows deal one death-blow!  
What though before us lies the open grave?  
Like men we'll face the murderous, cowardly pack,  
Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!

Section B:

2. Attempt a reader response reading of Mariama Bâ's *So Long a Letter*. (20marks)
3. Discuss the key tenets of feminism and demonstrate how you can apply the same to the analysis of Achebe's *A Man of the People*. (20marks)
4. Explain how you can apply psychoanalysis in the interpretation of *The Story of Anna P as Told by Herself*. (20marks)
5. Using ANY text from those studied in this course, attempt an interpretation of the text using historicism theory. (20marks)