



NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, ABUJA

Faculty of Arts

Department of Languages

2021_2 EXAMINATION

2021_1 EXAMINATION

COURSE CODE: **ENG 813**

COURSE TITLE: **LITERARY THEORY AND PRACTICAL CRITICISM**

TIME ALLOWED: **Three (3) Hours**

Answer **FOUR** questions out of five.

1. With emphasis on its content and form, attempt a practical critique of Gabriel Okara's "Piano and Drums"

45mins (17^{1/2} Marks)

Piano and Drums

When at break of day at a riverside
I hear the jungle drums telegraphing
the mystic rhythm, urgent, raw
like bleeding flesh, speaking of
primal youth and the beginning
I see the panther ready to pounce
the leopard snarling about to leap
and the hunters crouch with spears poised;

And my blood ripples, turns torrent,
topples the years and at once I'm
in my mother's laps a suckling;
at once I'm walking simple
paths with no innovations,
rugged, fashioned with the naked
warmth of hurrying feet and groping hearts
in green leaves and wild flowers pulsing.

Then I hear a wailing piano
solo speaking of complex ways in
tear-furrowed concerto;

of faraway lands
and new horizons with
coaxing diminuendo, counterpoint,
crescendo. But lost in the labyrinth
of its complexities, it ends in the middle
of a phrase at a daggerpoint.

And I lost in the morning mist
of an age at a riverside keep
wandering in the mystic rhythm
of jungle drums and the concerto.

Gabriel Okara

2(a) According to M.A Abrams (1953), “any reasonably adequate theory takes some account of four elements.” Discuss these elements, with adequate relevant illustrations. (8 Marks)

(b) With relevant illustrations, distinguish between literary theory and practical literary criticism. (2.5 marks)

(c) Highlight the functions of literary theory and practical criticism. (3.5marks)

(d) Discuss the nexus between the literary critic and the creative writer. (3.5marks)

45mins (TOTAL: 17^{1/2} Marks)

3. Write a critical essay on the origin, basic tenets/principles and weaknesses of Formalism. **45mins (17^{1/2} Marks)**

4. Elucidate the origins and main interpretative strategies of Post-structuralism.

45mins (17^{1/2} Marks)

5. Discuss the fundamental premises of Marxist criticism; attempt a critique of the theory. **45mins (17^{1/2} Marks)**