

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
MAIN EXAMINATION 2009/10
SECOND SEMESTER

COURSE NAME: INTRODUCTION TO MODERN LITERATURE

COURSE CODE: AL 101 / IDE AL 101

TIME ALLOWED: TWO (2) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1. ANSWER ANY THREE (3) QUESTIONS, ONE FROM EACH SECTION. EACH QUESTION CARRIES 20 MARKS.**

- 2. EACH QUESTION SHOULD BE COMMENCED ON A SEPARATE SHEET.**

- 3. DO NOT REPEAT MATERIAL OR WRITE ABOUT THE SAME TEXT AT LENGTH MORE THAN ONCE.**

- 4. CANDIDATES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BRING ANY READING MATERIAL INTO THE EXAMINATION HALL.**

- 5. IN THE ASSESSMENT OF THIS PAPER, CORRECT USAGE OF ENGLISH, THE QUALITY OF EXPRESSION AND THE PRESENTATION OF ANSWERS WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.**

THIS PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR.

**SECTION A
PROSE**

QUESTION 1

Chinua Achebe: *Things Fall Apart*

To which phase of the African novel does *Things Fall Apart* belong? Justify your answer in the following ways:

- a. What is the background story to Chinua Achebe's writing of the novel *Things Fall Apart*?
- b. Discuss Achebe's portrayal of Africans in the novel. Focus on at least one male character, one female character and stranger elements (either Mr. Kiaga or the kotmas).
- c. Discuss Achebe's portrayal of whites in the novel. Illustrate your discussion with materials on Mr. Brown, Revd. James Smith and the District Commissioner.

QUESTION 2

Mongo Beti: *The Poor Christ of Bomba*

What is the significance of the road in the novel *The Poor Christ of Bomba*? How does the road hasten Fr. Drumont's departure from the mission field?

QUESTION 3

Alex La Guma: *A Walk in the Night and other Stories*

- a. Discuss the relationship between the downtrodden victims of apartheid in *A Walk in the Night*. How does John Abrahams stand out as the odd man among them? Relate your ideas to the aptness or otherwise of the title of the novella.
- b. Describe the conflicting attitude of whites to non whites as typified by Constable Raalt and the nameless driver of the patrol wagon.

QUESTION 4

Thomas Mofolo: *Chaka*

- a. Discuss the concepts of 'Achilles Heel' and 'Tragic Flaw' as they apply to the Mofolo's eponymous hero, Chaka.
- b. Thomas Mofolo worked for the Christian Mission for a long time and it is not surprising that his *Chaka* is sprinkled with biblical allusions. Discuss these allusions and the image they impart on the character of Chaka.

**SECTION B
POETRY**

QUESTION 5

Senanu, K. E., & Vincent, T.: *A Selection of African Poetry*

Comment on the subject matter of Ilmi Boundheri's poem, 'As camels who have become thirsty'. How does the poem relate to the poet's country, Somalia? Also, comment on the poetic method used in crafting the poem.

QUESTION 6

Okot p'Bitek: *Song of Lawino & Song of Ocol*

Okot p'Bitek in his *Song of Lawino & Song of Ocol* has 'fabricated a bridge between the past and present societies'. Discuss.

**SECTION C
DRAMA**

QUESTION 7

Wole Soyinka: *The Trials of Brother Jero*

In *The Trials of Brother Jero*, Wole Soyinka advocates a 'breaking away' from destructive stereotypes and cultural norms in order to achieve social cleansing. What are these destructive factors?

QUESTION 8

Ama Ata Aidoo: *The Dilemma of a Ghost*

Explain the metaphor of the ghost in as used in Ama Ata Aidoo's *The Dilemma of a Ghost*. Weave your explanation around the major themes discussed in the play.