

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FUCULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER, SECOND SEMESTER 2012

- TITLE OF PAPER:** INTRODUCTION TO POETRY AND DRAMA
- COURSE CODE:** AL 114/IDE AL 114
- TIME ALLOWED:** TWO (3) HOURS
- INSTRUCTIONS:** (1) ANSWER THREE (3) QUESTIONS IN ALL, INCLUDING AT LEAST ONE QUESTION FROM EACH SECTION.
- (2) DO NOT REPEAT MATERIAL IN YOUR ANSWERS.
- (3) EACH QUESTION SHOULD BE COMMENCED ON A FRESH SHEET.
- (4) CLARITY OF EXPRESSION AND GOOD ORGANIZATION OF CONTENT WILL COUNT IN THE ASSESSMENT OF THIS PAPER.

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

SECTION A

THEORETICAL/CRITICAL ISSUES

Question 1

Discuss the features of poetic language illustrating your answer with examples from poems/songs of your choice.

Question 2

Literature deals with cultural issues that are the concern of numerous government agencies, social service institutions, and non-governmental organizations. Think of publications (brochures, pamphlets, leaflets, etc) of such agencies/organizations as the various ministries of government, NGOs like SWAGAA, etc. However, a SWAGAA pamphlet, for example, is not literature in the sense in which the word "literature" is understood at university. Discuss how a socio-cultural issue is transformed into "literature."

SECTION B

POETRY

Question 3

Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow it.

"Grandpa" by Paul Chidyausiku (Zimbabwe)

They say they are healthier than me

Though they can't walk to the end of a mile;

At their age I walked forty at night

To wage a battle at dawn

They think they are healthier than me:

If their socks get wet they catch a cold;

When my sockless feet got wet, I never sneezed –

But they still think they are happier than me.

On a soft mattress over a spring bed,

They still have to take a sleeping pill:

But I, with reeds cutting into my ribs,

My head resting on a piece of wood,

I sleep like a babe a snore.

They blow their noses and pocket the stuff –

That's hygienic so they tell me:

I blow my nose into the fire,

But they say that's barbaric.

If a dear one dies I weep without shame;

If someone jokes I laugh with all my heart.

They stifle a tear as if to cry was something wrong,

But they also stifle a laugh,

As if to laugh was something wrong too.

No wonder they need psychiatrists!

They think they have more power of will than me.

Our women were scarcely covered in days of yore,

But adultery was a thing unknown:

Today they go wild on seeing a slip on a hanger!

When I have more than one wife

They tell me that hell is my destination,

But when they have one and countless mistresses,

They pride themselves on cheating the world!

No let them learn to be honest with themselves first

Before they persuade me change my ways,

Says my grandfather, the proud old man.

END

- a. Give on a word or at most a five word phrase/clause/sentence describing what each stanza is about. (10 points)
- b. What two words by Chinweizu describe these people who "are not honest with themselves" but insist on changing "my grandfather, the proud old man's" ways? (4 points)
- c. Carry out a close reading of this poem taking care to highlight its atmosphere, the various poetic devices employed, the old man's overall attitude to "they". Comment too on the validity of the old man's attitude toward the younger generation. (26 points)

Question 4

Read the poem and answer the questions that follow.

"If Poets Must Have Flags" by David Evans (apartheid era South Africa)

They

ask for graceful poetry

to decorate their tyranny

poems

to make the hideous picturesque

entrails look like streamers

blood like wine

death like sleep

They

ask for wreaths

to strew murdered men's graves

poesies of sweet scented words

to drench away the stench

They

want anger to be buried

in the carved tomb of verse

the people to have music

to fugue human cries of pain

the organ of high mass

to drown out the sounds of massacre

They

ask the poet to be

a songbird in a cage

a eunuch in a choir

a slave of art

manacled his anguish in tinkling silver chains

We refuse.

We'll go ugly and free

exhuming the corpses

releasing the rot

revealing the holes

ripped by the shot.

We'll wrap around our banners

the guts of the dead

- If we must have flags

let them always be red.

END

- a. Who are "they"? (2 points)
- b. What do you understand by "graceful poetry" that "decorates their tyranny"? (5 points)
- c. What do we call the practice whereby the government bans writings and persecutes writers that are critical of it? (3 points)
- d. Discuss the type of poetry the state wanted during apartheid, the sort of poets it approved of, and the conditions that the state did not want poets/writers to capture in their writings. Evidence must be from this poem. Make sure you identify poetic devices and comment on their significance in the overall impact of the poem (30 points)

SECTION C

DRAMA

Enshungunshwini edited by ZodwaSithebe

Question 5

Discuss community development drama. Your comprehensive discussion should start with definition, aims, and how this sub-genre achieves its goals. Support your discussion with illustrations from one of the two plays, *UyintfoYani* by S.M. Magagula or *UnetigiPetepete* by S.M.M. Mkhombe. Use strictly one play. Why does this play have to have a happy ever after ending?

Dilemma of a Ghost by Ama Ata Aidoo.

Question 6

"Anyone, surely, will readily sympathise with women for their lot is certainly a miserable one. Most unfortunate is that they, women, are each others' enemy." To what extent is this statement applicable to Ama Ata Aidoo's *Dilemma of a Ghost*.