

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
MAIN EXAMINATION 2011/12

COURSE NAME: MODERN LITERATURE III

COURSE CODE: AL 402 / IDE AL 402

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) 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****Ama Ata Aidoo: Changes**

“Remember that a man always gains in stature any way he chooses to associate with a woman – including adultery . . . but, in her association with a man, a woman is always in danger of being diminished.”

Comment on the characters of Esi and Fusena in relation to the above statement.

QUESTION 2**Nawal el Saadawi: Woman at Point Zero**

“I was like a woman walking through an enchanted world to which she does not belong. She is free to do what she wants, and free not to do it . . . she experiences the rare pleasures of having no ties with anyone, of having broken with everything, of having cut all relations with the world around her, of being completely independent....”

With reference to the above quotation, discuss the theme of estrangement and relate how it connects to Firdaus’ sense of independence.

SECTION – B**POETRY****QUESTION 3**

“Even though Rubadiri’s “Stanley Meets Mutesa” and T. S. Eliot’s “The Journey of the Magi” focus on two different themes, T. S. Eliot’s Magi, seeking out the new-born Christ have become the explorer Stanley and his commandeered band of porters bringing new dispensation to Mutesa.” Write a critical assessment of this statement.

QUESTION 4

Compare and contrast the portrayal of cities at night in O. M. Mtshali's "Nightfall in Soweto", Kofi Awoonor's "Harlem on a Winter Night" and Dennis Brutus' "Nightsong: City." (The poems are attached at the end)

QUESTION 5

How does the poet Kofi Anyidoho use the metaphor of a 'long distance runner' to criticize the white American civilization which is built on the betrayal of minority races in his poem, "Long Distance Runner"?

SECTION – C**DRAMA****QUESTION 6**

Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ngugi wa Mirii: I Will Marry When I Want

Compare and contrast the two kinds of wedding ceremonies portrayed in the play and show how these ceremonies relate to the theme of the play.

QUESTION 7

Wole Soyinka: Death and the King's Horseman

"In this play, Soyinka has made Elesin's failure both individual and representative since he is both a finely delineated individual character and is also the embodiment of the culture of his people." Discuss this statement with relevant textual illustrations.

“Nightfall in Soweto”**Oswald Mbuyiseni Mtshali’s**

Nightfall comes like
a dreaded disease
seeping through the pores
of a healthy body
and ravaging beyond repair.

A murderer’s hand,
lurking in the shadows,
clasping the dagger,
strikes down the helpless victim.

I am the victim.
I am slaughtered
every night in the streets.
I am cornered by the fear
gnawing at my timid heart;
in my helplessness I languish.

Man has ceased to be man
Man has become beast
Man has become prey.

I am the prey;
I am the quarry to be run down
by the marauding beast
let loose by cruel nightfall
from his cage of death.

Where is my refuge?
Where am I safe?
Not in my matchbox house
Where I barricade myself against nightfall.

I tremble at his crunching footsteps,
I quake at his deafening knock at the door.
“Open Up!” he barks like a rabid dog
Thirsty for my blood.

Nightfall! Nightfall!
You are my mortal enemy.
But why were you ever created?
Why can’t it be daytime?
Daytime forever more?

“Harlem on a Winter Night”
Kofi Awoonor

Huddled pavements, dark,
the lonely wail of a police-siren
moving stealthily across
grey alleys of anonymity
asking for food either
as plasma in hospital jars,
escaping fires in tenements
grown cold and bitter,
or seeking food in community garbage cans
to escape its eternal nightmare.

Harlem, the dark dirge of America
heard at evening
mean alleyways of poverty,
dispossession, early death
in jammed doorways and creaking elevators,
glaring defeat in the morning
of this beautiful beautiful America.

“Nightsong: city”
Dennis Brutus

Sleep well, my love, sleep well:
the harbour lights glaze over restless docks,
police cars cockroach through the tunnel streets;

from the shanties creaking iron-sheets
violence like a bug-infested rag is tossed
and fear imminent as sound in the wind-swung bell;

the long day's anger pants from sand and rocks;
but for this breathing night at least;
my land, my love, sleep well.