

AL 416 / IDE AL 416

**UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND**  
**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE**  
**FINAL EXAMINATION-MAY 2013**

**TITLE OF PAPER: TRADITIONAL/ORAL LITERATURE 111**

**COURSE CODE : AL 416 / IDE-AL 416**

**TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS**

- INSTRUCTIONS:**
- 1. ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS, CHOOSING AT LEAST ONE (1) FROM EACH SECTION**
  - 2. EACH QUESTION SHOULD BE COMMENCED ON A SEPARATE PAGE.**
  - 3. CANDIDATES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BRING ANY READING MATERIAL INTO THE EXAMINATION HALL**
  - 4. IN THE ASSESMENT 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.**

**INSTRUCTIONS: ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS CHOOSING AT LEAST ONE  
(1) FROM EACH SECTION**

**SECTION A: MYTHS AND LEGENDS**

**QUESTION ONE**

1. Discuss the two basic categories in the definition of myth as a genre of orature. (20 marks).

**QUESTION TWO**

2. "African myths are full of instances of the cruelty of the gods". Giving multiple examples from the myths you have studied, discuss the reasons for god's cruelty and justify them. What does the cruelty of the gods say about the African view of the universe? (20 marks).

**QUESTION THREE**

3. Discuss the relationship between myth, epic and legend. (20 Marks)

**QUESTION FOUR**

4. Why do myths still play an important role in human communities? (20 marks)

**SECTION B: WOMEN AND ORATURE**

**QUESTION FIVE**

5. With relevant examples, show how the Swazi Reed dance/Umhlanga ceremony offers opportunity for oral artists to voice their concerns about uncontrollable sexual promiscuity among Swazi young girls as well as the oppression of women in the Swazi society as a whole. (20 marks)

**QUESTION SIX**

6. Critically examine the image of mothers and mothers-in-law motifs in Swazi orature (20 marks).

7. Critically analyze the folktale below and carefully bring out the norms of behaviour in relation to women in the Zulu or Swazi culture.

**UMAMBA KAMAQUBA ( Msimang, 1986:259-262)**

Once Upon a time, there was a chief. The chief's name was Mamba ( son) of Maquba. On a certain day, there was a girl who wanted to marry Mamba of Maquba. Indeed she out on a journey to marry Mamba of Maquba. Her name was Thokozile. Thokozile travelled and travelled until she came upon an old woman. She said to the old man: "May you please show me the way, granny? I am going to marry Mamba of Maquba." The woman then said, " Awu! My child! You want to marry Mamba of Maquba?" Thokozile answered in the affirmative. In fact, Mamba was a chief. This old woman had oozings in her eyes. Then she said " you see my child, if you want me to show you which way you must take, first leak the oozings from my eyes so that I can see the way properly."

Indeed the girl licked the oozings. She licked and licked until there was none left in the woman's eyes. Then the old woman said, "you see my child, since you have helped me so much in cleaning my eyes, I am going to direct you. You see my child. Mamba of Maquba is actually an animal. When you get there, they will be waiting for you. There are old women who always stay there waiting for the girls who come to marry Mamba of Maquba. On your arrival there they will instruct you to go to into a hut. When you have entered that hut you must sit down and keep quiet. You will hear Mamba of Maquba whistling. He will whistle and whistle and then you will hear his rumbling as he enters. At that stage my girl, you must not panic. Just sit still. Mamba will just roll himself and roll himself around until he rests his head against your neck, rolling himself all around your body. You mustn't be frightened at all. When he has finished rolling himself around you, take a bush knife and cut him up. You must chop him and chop him. He won't harm you.

The girl thanked her and continued on her journey. Farther on she met another woman. This woman could not carry a load on her head. Instead she carried loads on her buttocks. On seeing the girl this woman said, "Hhawu! Please help me lift up my load, my child. Thokozile did not vacillate; she took the load and lifted it for the woman. The woman thanked her and said, "Go (well)! You will have a happy marriage where you are going to."

Indeed Thokozile eventually arrived at the home of Mamba of Maquba. Indeed she found them waiting for her according to how the old woman told her. They let her in, gave her boiled sorghum to grind and to prepare meal for Mamba's amasi (curdled milk). Indeed she ground it. When she had finished, they said that she should go to Mamba's private hut. When she was there she heard shrill and whistling and rumbling as mamba of Maquba was approaching. The girl was alone in the hut, and above that the hut was closed. Suddenly she saw snake entering through a small hole in the hut. The girl just sat still. The snake came and rolled itself around her but she persevered. She was not frightened. Mamba rolled himself around her and eventually rested his head against her neck. He realised that the girl was not scared of him. He then went out through the same

hole which he had entered. He drove his cattle out to graze. In the afternoon, he returned to his private hut and found the girl waiting for him. He lived with her as a wife.

At home they heard that Thokozile had a prosperous marriage. Her younger sister became jealous. She also decided to go to Mamba of Maquba. Indeed she went off. She travelled and travelled and she met the old woman on her way. On coming upon her she said, "Granny! Granny! Show me the way to Mamba of Maquba's palace". The old woman answered and said, "It is alright my child, but first help me and lick my oozings, so that I can direct you well." The girl exclaimed with astonishment saying, "What! What do you mean? Do you think that these eyes of yours which are so full of eye-oozings are going to be cleaned by me? You will never see me doing that." The old woman then said, "It is alright, my child. I thought you wanted to be shown the way to Mamba's place, for I was going to direct you. Then girl proceeded with her journey. She travelled and travelled until she met a woman who was not able to carry a load on her head but on her buttocks. This woman requested the girl to help lift up her load. The girl expressed great astonishment and said, "Are you sitting here because you expected me to lift your load for you? You will never see me doing that." That woman said, "Go, you presumptuous boaster, but you will not get married where you are going to."

The girl proceeded farther until she got to the place of Mamba of Maquba. She found the old women already waiting for her. They let her into the hut in order to grind a meal for Mamba's amasi. They told her to make a nice and fine meal. Yet the girl made it very rough. When she had finished they took her into a private hut. It was closed with only a tiny opening high up in the hut. Suddenly the girl heard shrill whistling. She also heard a rumbling noise as Mamba approached his hut. Suddenly she saw the head of a snake nosing through the hole high up. The snake came in and started roll itself around the girl. The girl began to cry. Mamba of Maquba got angry. He slashed the girl with his tail. She ran, screaming all the way to her home. Mamba then turned back and returned home.

By then Thokozile was already pregnant. She gave birth to a beautiful girl. On a certain day she asked for permission to visit her folks back home. Mamba of Maquba consented, and said that he would go with her in order to send them lobola. The girl was happy but apprehensive about what they would say at home since her husband was a snake. She then remembered that the old man had said that she must chop up the snake with a bush-knife. Indeed on a certain day while Mamba was rolled up around Thokozile, she took the bush-knife and cut him up. She cut him and cut him into pieces. Suddenly she saw the pieces changing into a handsome young man. Indeed Mamba of Maquba had been transformed into a snake through witchcraft.

It was good when Mamba of Maquba had been transformed into a human being. He went with his wife to visit his in-laws. Mamba of Maquba was driving many cattle and Thokozile carrying their baby on her back. They arrived at home and there was great rejoicing.

Bit by bit, the story ends.