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UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FUCULTYOF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER, DECEMBER 2013

TITLE OF PAPER: INTRODUCTION TO PROSE FICTION AND PROSE NON-FICTION

COURSE CODE: AL 212/IDE AL212 – SUPPLEMENTARY PAPER

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS

- (1) ANSWER THREE (3) QUESTIONS IN ALL, INCLUDING AT LEAST ONE QUESTION FROM EACH SECTION.
- (2) DO NOT ANSWER TWO QUESTIONS FROM ONE TEXTBOOK
- (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- PROSE FICTION

ARROW OF GOD- CHINUA ACHEBE

Question 1

"Had there been mutual personal and cultural understanding between Ezeulu and Winterbottom, the story would not have ended in the disastrous manner that it did for both characters." Discuss.

Question 2

Read the excerpt below and answer the questions that follow

'Jealousy for what? I am not the first Ezeulu in Umuaro, he is not the first Ezidemili. If his father and his father's father and all the others before them were not jealous of my fathers why should he be of me? No, it is not jealousy but foolishness; the kind that puts its head into the pot. But if it is jealousy, let him go on. The fly that perches on a mound of dung may strut around as long as it likes, it cannot move the mound.'

'Everybody knows those two,' said Akuebue. 'We all know that if they knew the way to Ani-nmo they would go to quarrel with our ancestors for giving the priesthood of Ulu to Umuachala and not to their own village. I am not troubled about them. What troubles me is what the whole clan is saying.'

'Who tells the clan what it says? What does the clan know? Sometimes, Akuebue, you make me laugh. You were here---or had you not been born then---when the clan chose to go to war with Okperi over a piece of land which did not belong to us. Did I not stand up then and tell Umuaro what would happen to them? And who was right in the end? What I said, did it happen or did it not?'

Akuebue did not answer.

'Every word happened as I said it would.'

'I do not doubt that,' said Akuebue and, in a sudden access of impatience and recklessness, added, 'but you forget one thing: that no man however great can win judgement against a clan. You may think you did in that land dispute but you are wrong. Umuaro will always say that you betrayed them before the white man. And they will say that you are betraying them again today by sending your son to join in desecrating the land.'

Ezeulu's reply to this showed Akuebue once again that even to his best friend the priest was unknowable. Even his sons did not know him. Akuebue was not sure what reply he had expected, but it was most certainly not the laugh which he got now. It made him afraid and uneasy like one who encounters a madman laughing on a solitary path. He was given no time to examine this strange feeling of fear closely. But he was to have it again in future and it was only then that he saw its meaning.

'Don't make me laugh,' said Ezeulu again. 'So I betrayed Umuaro to the white man? Let me ask you one question. Who brought the white man here? Was it Ezeulu? We went to war against Okperi who are our blood brothers over a piece of land which did not belong to us and you blame the white man for stepping in. Have you not heard that when two brothers fight a stranger reaps their harvest? How many white men went in the party that destroyed Abame? Do you know? Five.' He held his right hand up with the five fingers fanned out. 'Five. Now have you ever heard that five people---even if their heads reached the sky---could overrun a whole clan? Impossible. With all their power and magic white men would not have overrun entire Olu and Igbo if we did not help them. Who showed them the way to Abame? They were not born there; how then did they find the way? We showed them and are still showing them. So let nobody come to me now and complain that the white man did this and did that. The man who brings ant-infested faggots into his hut should not grumble when lizards begin to pay him a visit.'

(a) Explain the following proverbs in the context of the broader story

I. The fly that perches on a mound of dung may strut around as long as it likes, it cannot move the mound. 2 points

II. When two brothers fight a stranger reaps their harvest. 2 points

III. The man who brings ant-infested faggots into his hut should not grumble when lizards begin to pay him a visit. 2 points

(b) Beginning with elements in the above excerpt, critically build up Ezeulu's strong case against the clan and then show how circumstances beyond him rob him of certain victory over the clan. 19 points

Total 25 points

A GRAIN OF WHEAT – NGUGI WA THIONGO

Question 3

'I am alright,' Karanja laughed uneasily and walked away to join the group around Kihika. Few had witnessed the little drama. Karanja found Kihika explaining something about Christ.

'No struggle for Wiyathi can succeed without such a man. Take the case of India, Mahatma Gandhi won freedom for people and paid with his own blood.'

Karanja, slightly shaken by his recent vision, suddenly felt irritated with Kihika.

'You say one thing now. The next hour you say another,' he said, addressing Kihika. 'This morning you said Jesus had failed. And now you say we need Christ. Are you becoming a revivalist?'

Karanja's contemptuous tone of unbelief and slightly derisive laughter hurt Kihika. He hesitated a little, not knowing how to react to this public challenge from a friend. People came closer and nodded their heads to see if Kihika had really been silenced. Kihika controlled his anger with difficulty and went on:

- (a) Describe the kind of day Karanja has had before this scene. 4 points
- (b) What 'recent vision' has he just had and how does it impact the course of his life? 4 points
- (c) How would you describe Kihika's character using evidence in the last paragraph of the excerpt? 2 points
- (d) How would you describe Kihika's brand of Christianity and how does it feature in the end of his life? 15 points

Question 4

Comment on the significance of Mumbi's depiction.

SECTION B – PROSE NON-FICTION

LAWRENCE VAMBE- AN ILL-FATED PEOPLE

Question 5

Read the excerpt below and answer the questions that follow –

But more immediately, these sensational discoveries, which were rapidly to be followed by the finding of gold, started a phenomenal movement whereby the white world, including Australia and America, oblivious to the Africans' interests, began to offload its human flotsam and jetsam onto the African soil. For the Africans, it was as if the white man was letting loose a wild beast, whose ferocious capacity and savage capacity to devour and destroy surpassed anything the African people could contrive in defence of heir freedom. White people from all corners of the world, of all degrees of greed, perverted values and ruthlessness, poured into the subcontinent and trailed to Kimberly, where this, one of the most valuable of all gems, was to be found. They all desired to be rich men and they started a diamond industry which boomed.

- (a) Identify and comment on the cultural significance of the two marine words Vambe uses to describe the white people that were attracted to Kimberly. 5 points.
- (b) Why does Vambe's assertion that 'the white man was letting loose a wild beast, whose ferocious capacity and savage capacity to devour and destroy surpassed anything the African people

could contrive in defence of their freedom' fly in the face of the hegemonic discourses of Western culture's positive effects on Africa? Support your response with evidence from *An Ill-fated People* and beyond.

Question 6

How does the narrative voice of the autobiographical persona support the fundamental thrust of the narrative of *An Ill-fated People*?

I WRITE WHAT I LIKE- STEVE BIKO

Question 7

A Durban-based Indian worker, a driver for a dry-clean firm told Biko that, 'I no more work in order to live, I live in order to work.' How typical and true was this for the non-white worker under apartheid and what circumstances gave birth to it? 25 points

Question 8

What are the core tenets of Biko's Black Consciousness Movement and to what extent do you think the average Southern African youth (of all racial hues) would identify with them (tenets of BCM)? 25 points

END