

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION 2007

TITLE OF PAPER: MODERN CRITICAL THEORY

COURSE CODE: ENG 304/ IDE ENG 304

TIME ALLOWED: TWO (2) HOURS

- INSTRUCTIONS: 1. ANSWER TWO QUESTIONS. EACH QUESTION CARRIES 30 MARKS.
2. DO NOT REPEAT MATERIAL OR WRITE ABOUT THE SAME TEXT AT LENGTH MORE THAN ONCE.
 3. CANDIDATES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BRING ANY READING MATERIAL INTO THE EXAMINATION ROOM.
 4. CORRECT USAGE OF ENGLISH WILL BE REWARDED AND GRAMMATICAL AND SPELLING MISTAKES PENALIZED.

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

1. Colonialism / Postcolonialism

- a. "African Anglophone critics and writers insist on the social role of the African artist and deny the European preoccupation with individual experience and this is considered as one of the most important and distinctive features in the assertion of a unique African Aesthetic." Discuss the Anglophone social and functional theory with reference to the above statement.

or

- b. "African literature is an autonomous entity separate from all the other literatures." Explain how the above statement (made by the 'Bolekaja' critics) seems to imply a refusal to concede that the historical fact of colonialism inevitably leads to a hybridization of culture.

2. Feminist Literary Criticism: Western / Afro American / African

- a. Betty Friedan's The Feminine Mystique is a pragmatic version of The Second Sex and shares the same focus: women's passive acceptance of the cultural stereotypes of femininity constructed by patriarchy. Discuss this statement.

or

- b. "Alice Walker's criticism highlights the way in which Black critics can name and control their own critical 'stories.' – discuss this statement with illustrations from Walker's literary texts.

3. Marxist Criticism

With the help of two texts you are familiar with, show how Marxist literary yardsticks are applied in African Literature.

4. Deconstruction

Show how the concept of Deconstruction has been used to introduce new meanings and ideas in literature. Cite at least two orientations and writers who manifest Deconstruction in their works.

5. Existentialism

“Existentialism is a philosophical movement concerned with freewill, choice and personal responsibility” – discuss any two existentialists and their philosophical views.

6. Reader Response Criticism

The following passage is an extract from a post-war novel. Analyse this extract with your understanding of the reader-response criticism.

By the time my turn to see the doctor came, my complaint seemed so trivial in comparison with the ills of age and worry and penury that I had doubts about presenting it at all. Reason told me, however, that I must do so, and I did. The woman in white showed me into the surgery: Dr Moffat was a harassed, keen-looking young man, with pale ginger receding hair. I felt sorry for him: he must have had a more unpleasant hour and a quarter than I had had. He told me to sit down and asked me what he could do for me, and I said that I thought I was pregnant, and he said how long had I been married, and I said that I was not married. It was quite simple. He shook his head, more in sorrow than in anger, and said did my parents know. I said

yes, thinking it would be easier to say yes, and not wishing to embark on explaining about their being in Africa. He said were they sympathetic, and I smiled my bright, meaningless smile and said Fairly. Then we worked out dates and he said it would be in due in March. Then he said he would try to get me a hospital bed, though I must understand there was a great shortage, and this and that, and had he got my address. I gave it, and he said was I living with my family and I said No, alone. He said did I know about the Unmarried Mothers people in Kentish town, and I said Yes. They were very nice and very helpful about adoption and things, he said. Then he said that he would let me know about the hospital bed, and would I come back in a fortnight. And that was that.