

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FINAL EXAMINATION 2010

COURSE TITLE: ADVANCED STUDIES IN AFRICAN LITERATURE

COURSE CODE: IDE-ENG 404

TIME ALLOWED: TWO HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS

1. ANSWER **TWO** QUESTIONS, **ONE** FROM EACH SECTION.
2. YOUR ANSWERS SHOULD NOT EXCEED **THREE** PAGES.
3. AVOID REPETITION OF MATERIAL ALREADY USED TO ANSWER ANOTHER QUESTION.
4. CORRECT USE OF ENGLISH AND LITERARY CONVENTIONS WILL BE AWARDED AND THE REVERSE SHALL BE PENALISED.

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

SECTION A: PROSE AND DRAMA

1. So Long a Letter: Mariama Ba

‘You think the problem of polygamy is a simple one. Those who are involved in it know the constraints, the lies, the injustices that weigh down their consciences in return for the ephemeral joys of change’.

With close reference to Ramatoulaye’s words above, discuss her marriage experiences, explaining how she hopes to liberate herself from such ravages. [30]

2. The Mending Season: Kagiso Molope

With the aid of examples discuss how the netball incident is perceived by the Whites on one hand and the Blacks on the other. [30]

3. The Blood Knot: Athol Fugard

Illustrate how in The Blood Knot Fugard explores the race issue, particularly at family level. [30]

SECTION B: POETRY

POETRY: CROSSINGS: A. Heywood

4. Read the two poems below and proceed to compare and contrast them in terms of form, subject, cultural context, tone of voice and imagery. [30]

ABIKU

J.P.Clark (Nigeria)

Coming and going these several seasons,
Do stay out on the baobab tree,
Follow where you please your kindred spirits
If indoors is not enough for you.
True, it leaks through the thatch
When floods brim the banks,
And the bats and the owls
Often tear in at night through the eaves,
And at harmattan, the bamboo walls
Are ready tinder for the fire
That dries the fresh fish up on the rack.
Still, it's been the healthy stock
To several fingers, to many more will be
Who reach to the sun.
No longer then bestride the threshold
But step in and stay
For good. We know the knife scars
Serrating down your back and front
Like beak of the sword-fish,

And both your ears, notched
As a bondman man to this house,
Are all relics of your first comings.
Then step in, inand stay
For her body is tired,
Tired, her milk going sour
Where many more mouths gladden the heart.

ABIKU

Wole Soyinka (Nigeria)

In vain your bangles cast
Charmed circles at my feet;
I am Abiku, calling for the first
And repeated time.

Must I weep for goats and cowries
For palm oil and sprinkled ash?
Yams do not sprout in amulets
To earth Abiku's limbs.

So when the snail is burnt in his shell
Whet the heated fragment, brand me
Deeply on the breast. You must know him
When Abiku calls again.

I am the squirrel teeth, crackled

The riddle of the palm. Remember
This, and dig me deeper still into
The god' swollen foot

Once and the repeated time, ageless
Though I puke. And when you pour
Libations, each finger points me near
The way I came, where

The ground is wet with mourning
White dew suckles flesh-birds
Evening befriends the spider, trapping
Flies in wind-froth.

Night, and Abiku sucks the oil
From lamps. Mothers! I'll be the
Suppliant snake coiled on the doorstep
Yours the killing cry.

The ripest fruit was saddest;
Where I crept, the warmth was cloying.
In the silence of webs, Abiku moans, shaping
Mounds from the yolk.

5. Choose a poem from the prescribed list and discuss it following the poetic analytical steps.
[30]