

**UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND  
SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION 2011**

**COURSE NAME:** COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

**COURSE CODE:** ENG 405 /IDE-ENG405

**DURATION:** Two Hours

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Answer two questions, one from each section.
2. Correct expression and adherence to correct literary conventions will count.
3. All the questions carry equal marks.
4. This paper is six pages long, cover page included.

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BEEN GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR**

## SECTION A – PROSE

### Question One

Manchild in the Promised Land Claude Brown  
A Dry White Season Andre Brink

- a) Is there a similarity between the behaviour of Sonny's father towards whites in Manchild in the Promised Land and that of Gordon Ngubene, Jonathan's father, in A Dry White Season? Give a fully illustrated answer. [20]
- b) Discuss Brown and Brink's intentions in the portrayal of these two characters. [10]

### Question Two

The Madonna of Excelsior Zakes Mda  
In My Father's House Ernest Gaines

"There is a difference in the way Christianity is portrayed in the two novels." Discuss this statement fully, citing and discussing the roles of relevant characters. [30]

### Question Three

A Dry White Season  
The Madonna of Excelsior

Comparatively discuss Brink and Mda's portrayal of the racial divide in the two novels. [30]

### Question Four

Coconut Kopano Matlwa  
In My Father's House

Comparatively discuss Matlwa and Gaines' intentions in the portrayal of the relationship between Tshepo and his father and Robert X and his father. [30]

## SECTION B – POETRY

### Question Five

Comparatively discuss the social visions of Mattera and Mahola in the two poems below, taking into account the poems' setting and the poets' choice of imagery. [30]

**"Let the children decide"** Don Mattera

Let us halt this quibbling  
Of reform and racial preservation  
Saying who belongs to which nation  
And let the children decide  
It is their world.

Let us burn our uniforms  
Of old scars and grievances  
And call back our spent dreams  
And the relics of crass tradition  
That hang on our malignant hearts  
And let the children decide  
For it IS their world

**“In My House” Mzi Mahola**

In the last days  
There was a call  
For a final push  
On the rotting tree  
So that its fall  
Could echo throughout the world.

A flock of birds  
Feasting on its worms  
Scattered to nearby bushes.  
Sadly the grounded tree  
Was not incinerated  
And its vermin snuggled underneath.

Then a house was built  
Where the blighted tree stood  
And more parasites were positioned  
To descend like a wave of locusts,  
Suckers who feared no shame;  
All soiling their nails with dirt  
As temptation invaded their heads...

**Question Six**

Read the poems below and answer the question that follows:

**“To a Brown Girl” Ossie Davis**

Since I care not for what is pale and cold

My heart must hunger when the snows are down  
For dearer climates, where the sun, of old,  
Taught us that love is something warm and brown.

Here, like a stranger, stranded in the north,  
I dream the scarlet dream of purple skies,  
And strain for glimpses, as I hurry forth,  
Of shy reports: rich-black, and passion-wise.

And laugh to plumb the deep-remembered flood  
Of tropic heats, where winter cannot come.  
And feel within the pulses of my blood  
The white-eyed throbbings of some ancient drum.

And I can treasure this: to catch a trace,  
Still burning hot and bright beneath the chill-  
Beneath the bosom of your brown embrace  
Hot suns of Africa are burning still.

**“The Children of Nonti” Mefika Gwala**

Nonti Nzimande died long, long ago  
Yet his children still live.  
Generation after generation, they live on;  
Death comes to the children of Nonti  
And the children of Nonti cry but won't panic  
And there is survival in the children of Nonti.

Poverty swoops its deathly wings. But tough,  
strong and witty are the children of Nonti.  
The wet rains fall. The roads become like  
the marshed rice paddies of the Far East;  
And on these desolate roads there is song  
Song in the Black voices of the children of Nonti.

Someone marries  
The bride does not hide her face under the veil;  
The maidens dance near the kraal  
Dance before the 'make it merry' eyes  
of the elders. The elders joshing it  
on their young days.  
There is still free laughter

in the children of Nonti.

An ox drops to the earth, then another;  
Knives run into the meat. Making the feast  
to be blood-filled with Life.  
The old, the dead, are brought into the Present  
of continuous nature in the children of Nonti.  
Got to be a respecting with the children of Nonti.

When a daughter has brought shame  
The women show anger; not wrath.  
And the illegitimate born is one of  
the family.  
When a son is charged by the white law  
The children of Nonti bring their heads together  
In a bid to free one of the children of Nonti.

There are no sixes and nines be one  
with the children of Nonti. Truth is truth  
and lies are lies amongst the children of Nonti.  
For when summer takes its place after the winter  
The children of Nonti rejoice  
and call it proof of Truth  
Truth reigns amongst the children of Nonti.

Sometimes a son rises above the others  
of the children of Nonti. He explains the workings  
and the trappings of white thinking.  
The elders debate;  
And add to their abounding knowledge  
of black experience.

The son is still one of the black children of Nonti  
For there is oneness in the children of Nonti.

And later, later when the sun  
is like forever down;  
Later when the dark rules  
above the light of Truth  
The black children of Nonti will rise and speak.  
They will speak of the time  
when Nonti lived in peace with his children;  
Of the times when age did not count  
above experience. The children of Nonti will stand  
their ground in the way that Nonti speared his foes  
to free his black brothers from death and woes;  
They shall fight with the tightened grip  
of a cornered pard. For they shall be knowing that  
Nothing is more vital than standing up  
For the Truths that Nonti lived for.  
Then there shall be Freedom in that stand  
by the children of Nonti.  
Truthful tales shall be told  
Of how the children of Nonti pushed their will;  
And continued to live by the peace  
The peace that Nonti once taught to them.

Taking into account the point of departure for each poem as well as its setting and metaphorical aspects, comparatively discuss the ways in which the theme of identity is treated in the poems. [30]