

# UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION

MAY 2015

TITLE OF PAPER : ADVANCED STUDIES IN AFRICAN LITERATURE

COURSE CODE : ENG 404

TIME ALLOWED : TWO (2) HOURS

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Answer any TWO questions. **One from each section.**
2. Each question carries 30 marks. The total marks for the examination is 60%.
3. Do not repeat material or write about the same text at length more than once.
4. Candidates are not allowed to bring any reading material into the examination room.
5. Correct use of English and literary conventions will be rewarded and the contrary will be penalised.

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

## SECTION A: NOVELS

### Question 1

#### So Long a Letter– Ba

Aissatou is not only a victim of polygamy but of ethnicity as well. Discuss this statement. [30]

### Question 2

“Bregin seems to suggest that the first step to a true democratic South Africa is through changing the Apartheid Laws.” Discuss how Bregin suggests this.

### Question 3

#### The Bird of Heaven – Dunseith

The theme of quest is often characterised by hardships and extra-ordinary challenges. How is this reflected in this novel? [30]

## SECTION B: DRAMA AND POETRY

### Question 4

Among other things Negritude poets revere the ancestral world. With specific references to the poem below discuss this statement. [30]

“Viaticum” Birango Diop

In one of the three jugs  
 The three jugs where on certain evenings return  
 the tranquil souls,  
 the breaths of the ancestors,  
 the ancestors who were men,  
 the ancestors who were sages,  
 Mother has dipped three fingers  
 three fingers of her left hand:  
 thumb, forefinger and middle finger  
 I have dipped three fingers  
 three fingers of my right hand:  
 thumb, forefinger and middle finger.

With her three fingers red with blood,  
 with dog's blood,  
 with bull's blood,  
 with goat's blood,  
 Mother has touched me three times.  
 She touched my forehead with her thumb,  
 with her forefinger my left breast  
 and my navel with her middle finger.  
 I have held out my fingers red with blood,  
 with dog's blood,  
 with bull's blood,  
 with goat's blood,  
 I have held my three fingers to the winds  
 the north wind, the east wind,  
 the south wind, the west wind;  
 and I have raised my three fingers towards the Moon  
 towards the full Moon, the full, naked Moon  
 when she was at the bottom of the biggest jug.  
 I have thrust my three fingers into the sand,  
 into the sand which had grown cool.  
 Mother said: "Go through the World, go  
 in Life. They will follow thy traces."

Since then I go,  
 I go by the tracks and on the roads,  
 beyond the seas and further still  
 beyond the sea and further, further still,  
 beyond the sea and beyond the place beyond.  
 And when I come to the wicked men,  
 the black-hearted men,  
 when I come to the envious,  
 the black-hearted men,  
 before me advance the breaths of the forefathers.

### Question 5

Discuss how through imagery Clark characterises fertility and impotence and comment on how this either exonerates or belittles the individual concerned. [30]