

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
FIRST SEMESTER EXAMINATION
DECEMBER - 2016

COURSE TITLE : INTRODUCTION TO CRITICAL THEORY

COURSE CODE : ENG 212

TIME ALLOWED : TWO (2) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Answer any **TWO** questions.
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.

QUESTION 1

Distinguish between the coordinates and orientations of literary study. [30]

QUESTION 2A

Show the connection between pragmatic criticism and Ruth Finnegan's theory of literature expressed in her discussion of "The Oral Nature of African Unwritten Literature." [30]

OR

QUESTION 2B

Comment on what Ruth Finnegan says about the following elements of Oral Literature:

- a. Oral composition
- b. Oral transmission
- c. Oral Performance

[30]

QUESTION 3

Liz Gunner argues that orality is the vector of culture. Do you agree? How is her idea of orality in her paper, "Africa and Orality", suggestive that oral African Literature serves a social functional purpose? [30]

QUESTION 4

Describe the main argument of the Marxist theory in Literature. (10)

Show the relationship between the Marxist theory of literature and Ngugi wa Thiong'o's critical idea of literature projected through his paper, "Literature and Society: The Politics of the Canon". (20)

QUESTION 5

Chinua Achebe, in his article 'The Novelist as Teacher', asserts that literature should serve a social and functional purpose. Discuss. [30]

QUESTION 6

Abiola Irele contends that Negritude is a form of Pan-Africanism. What do you understand by this? Illustrate your views through a careful analysis of the following Negritude poem: [30]

56 BREATH

Birago Diop (Senegal)

Listen more to things
Than to words that are said.
The water's voice sings
And the flame cries
5 And the wind that brings
The woods to sighs
Is the breathing of the dead.

Those who are dead have never gone away.
They are in the shadows darkening around,
10 They are in the shadows fading into day,
The dead are not under the ground.
They are in the trees that quiver,
They are in the woods that weep,
They are in the waters of the rivers,
15 They are in the waters that sleep.
They are in the crowds, they are in the homestead.
The dead are never dead.

Listen more to things
Than to words that are said.
20 The water's voice sings
And the flame cries
And the wind that brings
The woods to sighs
Is the breathing of the dead
25 Who have not gone away
Who are not under the ground
Who are never dead.

Those who are dead have never gone away.
They are at the breast of the wife.
30 They are in the child's cry of dismay
And the fire brand bursting into life.
The dead are not under the ground.
They are in the fire that burns low
They are in the grass with tears to shed,
35 In the rock where whining winds blow

They are in the forest, they are in the homestead.
The dead are never dead.

Listen more to things
Than to words that are said.

40 The water's voice sings
And the flame cries
And the wind that brings
The woods to sighs
Is the breathing of the dead.

45 And repeats each day
The Covenant where it is said
That our fate is bound to the law,

And the fate of the dead who are not dead
To the spirits of breath who are stronger than they.
50 We are bound to Life by this harsh law
And by this Covenant we are bound
To the deeds of the breathings that die
Along the bed and the banks of the river,
To the deeds of the breaths that quiver
55 In the rock that whines and the grasses that cry
To the deeds of the breathings that lie
In the shadow that lightens and grows deep
In the tree that shudders, in the woods that weep,
In the waters that flow and the waters that sleep,
60 To the spirits of breath who are stronger than they
That have taken the breath of the deathless dead
Of the dead who have never gone away
Of the dead who are not now under the ground.

Listen more to things
65 Than to words that are said.
The water's voice sings
And the flame cries
And the wind that brings
The woods to sighs
70 Is the breathing of the dead.