

Course Code: T3P2/IDE-T3P2 (M) 2008

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

B.A./B.ED. III/IDE

FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER, MAY 2008

- TITLE OF PAPER** : **AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGIONS I**
- COURSE CODE** : **T3P2/IDE-T3P2**
- TIME ALLOWED** : **THREE (3) HOURS**
- INSTRUCTIONS** :
- 1. ANSWER FOUR (4) QUESTIONS IN ALL.**
 - 2. TWO QUESTIONS MUST BE ATTEMPTED FROM EACH SECTION.**
 - 3. ALL QUESTIONS CARRY EQUAL MARKS.**

THIS QUESTION PAPER MUST NOT BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR.

SECTION A

QUESTION 1

"Africans are notoriously religious, each people has its own religious system with a set of beliefs and practices . . . A study of these religious systems is ultimately a study of the people themselves in all the complexities of both traditional and modern life" (Mbiti, J). Explain this statement with particular reference to the nature of African Traditional Religions.

QUESTION 2

Discuss at least two methodological approaches to the study of African Traditional Religions which, in your opinion, contribute to a better understanding and appreciation of African Traditional Religions.

QUESTION 3

"Taking Africa as a whole, there are in reality five component elements that go into the making of African traditional religion" (Idowu, E. B). Write a critique of this assertion citing relevant examples from several African ethnic groups.

QUESTION 4

What do we mean by an "African world view"? Explain whether or not traditional African notions of time and causality find expression through some of the basic African religious beliefs and practices.

QUESTION 5

Is the indigenous African philosophy of "Buntfu, Ubuntu/Botho" relevant to modern Africa? Give concrete examples to illustrate your views.

QUESTION 6

What is your position regarding the current policy of the Swaziland Ministry of Education to promote the study of African Traditional Religions in Secondary Schools? Do you anticipate any moral and social problems that might arise from this policy?

SECTION B

QUESTION 7

What do we mean by "rites of passage" in the context of African Traditional Religions? With particular reference to any African society of your choice, discuss two rites of passage which, in your view, still prevail in many

sub-saharan African countries.

QUESTION 8

Explain why many scholars regard Traditional Healers as religious leaders in African Traditional Religions. Would you agree with Mbiti that many Africans consider Traditional Healers as "friends of their respective communities"?

QUESTION 9

Critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of the institution of divine kingship in African society. In your considered opinion, what are the prospects of sacred monarchies in modern Africa?

QUESTION 10

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Swaziland (2005) provides for the equality of men and women in all sphere of life. Explain the implications of this provision for some of the religio-cultural practices of Swazi Traditional Religion which undermine or appear to undermine this law.

QUESTION 11

Describe the place of African Traditional Religions in multicultural African societies. Give pertinent examples to illustrate your views.

QUESTION 12

"Many Africans believe in the power of both the ancestors and God" Comment on this statement with special reference to the relationship between Swazi Traditional Religion and Christianity.