

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

TRS 304 MAIN EXAMINATION, MAY 2017

TITLE OF PAPER : AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION II
COURSE CODE : TRS 304
DURATION : 2 Hours

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Choose and answer three (3) questions in all.
2. Write in clear, grammatically correct sentences.
3. All questions carry equal marks.

DO NOT OPEN THIS PAPER UNTIL THE INVIGILATOR GRANTS YOU PERMISSION TO DO SO.

Question 1

In traditional African society “sacred specialists are both feared and revered. People often say that specialists have *isithunzi* (an aura or dignity), which accompanies her office” (Masondo 2011). Write a critical comment on this observation with particular focus on the role of diviners (*izangoma / tangoma / na'nga*) in contemporary African society. In your answer, you should draw examples from at least two different African ethnic groups that you have studied.

Question 2

“Divine kingship is (or was) found in simple or primitive (as opposed to complex) societies, in which religion has not properly developed as an institution separate from those which maintain the social and political order” (Bourdillon 1990). Write a critique of this observation, citing relevant examples from two different African societies.

Question 3

Explain the meaning of puberty rites in one African society that you have studied. What are the prospects of these rites in modern African society?

Question 4

“Besides men being abusers and oppressors of women, women also become their own oppressors” (Baloyi 2015). Discuss this claim with particular reference to customs and rites involving women which are enforced by women.

Question 5

“The beliefs and all other aspects of ATR that are relevant to the protection of the environment and constitute a fundamental spiritual resource that may be harnessed to address environmental problems” (Feris and Moitui 2011). Discuss this assertion and cite relevant examples of beliefs and practices of ATR that may be harnessed to address environmental concerns.

Question 6

“Most Swazi *tangoma* (diviners) publicly affirm their unswerving dual loyalty and belonging to both Swazi Religion and Christianity” (Ndlovu 2017). Write a critique of this claim, showing whether or not what allegedly prevails in Swaziland has been observed in other African cultures.