

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER, MAY 2009

TITLE OF PAPER : **SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY**

COURSE CODE : **SOC301**

TIME ALLOWED : **THREE (3) HOURS**

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. ANSWER ANY FOUR (4) QUESTIONS.**
- 2. ALL QUESTIONS CARRY EQUAL MARKS**

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

SOC301: SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

1. Compare and contrast Comte's *law of the three stages* with Spencer's theory of societal evolution.
2. Explain what is meant by the term functional imperative, and discuss the main action systems responsible for the performance of functional imperatives according to Talcott Parsons.
3. Discuss Ralf Dahrendorf's central thesis that social conflicts are always caused by the differential distribution of authority.
4. Critically discuss the main assumptions of interpretivist theories.
5. Discuss how any two variants of feminist theory employ the concept of patriarchy to characterize and explain oppression in society.
6. Discuss Robert Merton's criticism of the basic postulates of functional analysis. To what extent do you agree with Merton's arguments?
7. Analyse the agency-structure debate with specific reference to the works of Giddens and Abrams.
8. Examine Jean Baudrillard's analysis of the consumer society. Provide relevant examples to illustrate your answer.