

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

FINAL EXAMINATION-MAY 2010

TITLE OF PAPER: TRADITIONAL/ORAL LITERATURE 1

COURSE CODE : AL 203 / IDE-AL 203

TIME ALLOWED: TWO (2) HOURS

- INSTRUCTIONS :**
- 1. ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS, CHOOSING AT LEAST ONE (1) FROM EACH SECTION.**
 - 2. EACH QUESTION SHOULD BE COMMENCED ON A SEPARATE PAGE.**
 - 3. CANDIDATES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BRING ANY READING MATERIAL INTO THE EXAMINATION HALL**
 - 4. IN THE ASSESMENT OF THIS PAPER, CORRECT USAGE OF ENGLISH, THE QUALITY OF EXPRESSION AND THE PRESENTATION OF ANSWERS WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT**

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

TRADITIONAL/ ORAL LITERATURE 1

INSTRUCTIONS: ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS, CHOOSING AT LEAST ONE (1) FROM EACH SECTION.

SECTION A: ESSAY QUESTIONS ON ORAL POETRY

1. "The song or poem is the most basic and profuse form of emotive expression in traditional Swazi society" Comment on the above statement in the light of Swazi oral Poetry. (20 marks)
2. Discuss the various categories of Oral Poets in traditional Swazi Community. (20 Marks)
3. The modern performer remains rooted within his context commenting on present day happenings. Discuss. (20 Marks)
4. Discuss the relevance of Lullabies in children's development and acquisition of the traditional Swazi Oral art. (20 Marks)
5. Discuss the role of the oral artist in Swazi traditional society. (20 marks)

SECTION B: ANALYSIS OF THE ORAL POEMS

6. Analyze the following Swazi dirge paying particular attention to "style" and "the theme of transition". (20 Marks)

O-o-o-o-o-o.-o-OOO

The pillar of our house has fallen

The father of my children is no more.

Who will shield us from our enemies?

Who will clear the bush for us to farm?

Who will provide me with cooking oil?

When he was alive

The children were strong and healthy,

Now that he is dead,

They will suffer from hunger and thirst.

O death, why did you choose this moment to

Knock at my door?

Merciless death, why did you only

Decide to put off the fire that burns in my hut?

7. Carefully read the following royal praise poem and answer the questions that follow

THE KING OF BEBETA COUGHS

Cough our lord,
Cough, the husband of all maidens cough,
Cough, the Lion of the forest,
The lightening of the dry season,
The ruler of peoples,
The livestock of all the herds of cattle,
The noblest breed of our strong ancestors,
The one who- speaks-once,
The one who trembles the mountains and moves words,
Whose name goes beyond the boundaries of the setting sun.
The big one who never drinks water,
Who never misses his target,
Who never eats less than many times,
Our king, cough,
The one with the thick mane,
When you laugh once, drum men dance many moons,
When your eyes rove around, forest freeze in fear,
When you sleep, thighs of beautiful daughters of the world provide not enough cushions!
When you fart, noble noses pray for more
When you eat, maidens hold bowls of dishes for you,
When you wink at a virgin, her fortunate clan brings you fortune for thanksgiving.
When you walk, the earth trembles under your feet, the roc stones break!
When you hold your spear, hyenas dance in thousands, and rivers fill up their banks!
When you order for your bow, the neighbour kings dig their graves, cough, and noble one, cough!
The chief maidens have warmed up ten milk guards for your throat.
Ten maidens have held up their shining palms for your golden spittle.
Ten fat he goats are being slaughtered for your throat,
Ten villages are preparing for honey-brew for your throat,
Ten pots of rich broth are being brought for your throat.
And if your throat should hurt, ten medicine men are here ready with their medicines and charms.
And twenty virgins will smear oil on your chest and neck.
Their breast will warm you up in the cold of the night!
Cough, Great Lion Cough!
Great commander, Leopard of the rainy season,

Holder of men's life,
 Giver of blessings and prosperity,
 Master of clouds and heaven, cough, cough,
 Cough even only once and the rock will break.
 The mountains will tremble,
 The women will urinate,
 The man will breathe faster,
 The strong beast will starve in their caves,
 The eagle's wings will rigidify, and mountains will echo your cough.
 He who is ever great!
 He who masters the masters!
 He who wins all the battles!
 He whose cattle enclosures are unaccountable!
 He whose drum sounds beyond valleys and ridges!
 He who drives bad winds and good winds,
 Pregnant winds and aborted winds,
 Rumbling soldiers and grunting heavens, either for prosperity or starvation!
 He who fears nobody has coughed, has cleared his voice for great matters when
 he shall speak
 And we, if we aren't women and he the master,
 Are we not trembling?

QUESTIONS.

- Describe four different political and social powers of the king mentioned in the text (4 marks).
- Why does the poet extol the importance of royal cough? (4 marks)
- Comment on the poet's style with particular reference to the use of satire, images and symbols (4 marks)
- Comment on the diction of the poem (4 marks)
- What is the poet's attitude towards his subject matter (4 marks)

Good luck