

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATIONS PAPER, JULY 2015/16

TITLE OF PAPER: INTRODUCTION TO PROSE FICTION AND PROSE NON-FICTION

COURSE CODE: IDE AL 111; **STRICTLY FOR INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION STUDENTS AND NOT FOR FULLTIME STUDENTS**

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS

(1) ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS IN ALL

(2) DO NOT REPEAT MATERIAL IN YOUR ANSWERS

(3) EACH QUESTION SHOULD BE COMMENCED ON A FRESH SHEET

(4) CLARITY OF EXPRESSION AND EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION OF CONTENT WILL COUNT IN THE AWARD OF POINTS FOR THIS PAPER

(5) EACH QUESTION HAS 33 MARKS

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

QUESTION 1

In your view, which African novel best captures the advent of European colonialism in Africa and the local people's responses to it? Why do you regard the novel of your choice 'the best'?

QUESTION 2

Some short stories' strength lies in their plot construction while the strength of others lies in the characterization. With examples from short stories of your choice, illustrate the above assertion.

QUESTION 3

What artistic benefits do modern African writers gain by utilizing indigenous verbal elements in their written works? Discuss this question with evidence from some of the work(s) you have studied this academic year.

QUESTION 4

Read the excerpt from Lawrence Vambe's *An Ill-fated People* and comment on the stylistic and thematic features exhibited.

QUESTION 5

In your view, how does spatial setting and occasion contribute to autobiographical narrative? Support your answer with evidence from an autobiographical text of your choice.

QUESTION 6

"If a protagonist does not experience an epiphany, no matter how great the novel, such a protagonist does not deserve the title of hero." Do you agree? Support your response with evidence from a novel of your choice. END

sary. It appears the white soldiers were more interested in killing Africans than in capturing them alive. That was the impression gained by some of my people who lived to tell the tale of this conflict. The manner in which men like Paramount Chiefs Makoni and Mashayamombe met their deaths certainly confirms that the European soldiers were totally devoid of compassion and magnanimity towards their black foes. I shall say more about Makoni and Mashayamombe later. Yet the people of Mashonaland struggled on doggedly until they realized that if they went on any further they might be exterminated altogether, particularly through starvation. The thorough destruction of their food stocks by the white troops was ultimately the determining factor, said the VaShawasha people. They were reduced to existing solely on wild fruit, roots and field rats. Many of them died from starvation. Some of the early settlers who experienced the Shona rebellion admitted that the Shona were a great deal more determined and tenacious than the Ndebele. They must have angered the Europeans even more by their methods of fighting. Unlike the Ndebele whose military tactics took the form of massive charges and therefore provided excellent shooting targets, the Shona operated as guerrillas, striking only when it was to their advantage and disappearing into natural cover before the enemy had time to recover his balance. This was particularly galling to the enemy who wished for a speedy end to this expensive war and who did not care how many blacks were killed. I suppose that this was one of the reasons why the white soldiers resorted to such gruesome methods as the use of dynamite. If Mashonaland had had thick forests, like parts of Kenya and Malaya, for instance, the odds against the African people might not have been so overwhelming.

However, sooner or later they had to give up the struggle. As they were cut off from one another and contact became virtually impossible, each tribe or group of people began to surrender individually. By the end of 1897, the rebellion was practically over.

Thinking of the tangled problems of my country, as I have done every day of my adult life, I return again and again to this ugly drama of 1896. I am sure it was inevitable, given the state of affairs at the time, but I have come to believe that

it was this war, more than anything else, which degraded Rhodesia, both black and white.

It degraded the African, because it destroyed his political balance, his hope, his dignity. It profoundly undermined his self-confidence. From the time of the 1896 rebellion, my people have tried to find a common platform from which to assert their rights. There have been many African organizations, of all kinds, political and social, led by fine men. Of course organizations everywhere suffer division and debate, but disunity and acrimony have eroded our attempts to further African progress. This is in spite of the example set by our forebears in 1896. This is in spite of the example of unity given us by white South Africans and white Rhodesians—the unity of white reaction everywhere. I believe that our comparative lack of political maturity (which is fortunately showing signs of improving) is due to the humiliations of the 1896 defeat, and the savage reprisals we suffered afterwards. We have lived too long as a conquered people in a conquered country, and have not found it easy to recover our national self-respect.

As for white Rhodesians, I believe the 1896 struggle degraded them even more than it did us. They are in possession of a wonderful, rich country. But it is an African country, just as England is a country of the English people. They tyrannize a peace-loving, friendly, adaptable people, who long for freedom, education and equal opportunities to use their constructive energies, to create the material and spiritual wealth that would improve the quality of life for everyone, including their white compatriots. By using the best values of Western civilization, of Christianity, white Rhodesians could make a special and lasting contribution to all Africa. But instead they threaten and defy Africa, and African dignity. They impose on their fellows, the black people, miseries and humiliations that the civilized of the world repudiate because they are repugnant and obnoxious to everything that Christianity and the family of man stand for. And their behaviour is dangerous to themselves, for history teaches that conquerors will in their turn be conquered. They do not seem to be able to learn from the facts of their situation. They are inflexible and stupid. I think the reason for this is that they have never been in anything else but the position of