

# UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

## FINAL EXAMINATION 2010

COURSE TITLE: ADVANCED STUDIES IN AFRICAN LITERATURE

COURSE TITLE: ENG 404

TIME ALLOWED: TWO HOURS

- INSTRUCTIONS:
1. Answer TWO questions, one from each section.
  2. Your answers should not exceed three pages.
  3. Do not repeat material or write about the same text more than once.
  4. Correct use of English and literary conventions will be rewarded and the reverse will be penalised.

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

## Section A: Novel and Drama

### So Long a Letter Ba

1. Discuss how Ba uses the epistolary as well as the letter within a letter technique(s) to tell Ramatoulaye's story as well as those of other women. [30]

### The Red Haired Khumalo Bregin

2. What are some of the challenges that South Africans as a nation face as they seek to create a more socially equitable community? [30]

### The Bird of Heaven Dunseith

3. In this narration Dunseith has used Swazi magic realism and ritual to explore the opposing forces of good and evil. Discuss. [30]

### Song of a Goat Clark

4. Discuss the role of ritual cleansing in the dramatization of the events and circumstances of the play. [30]

## Section B: Poetry

### Crossings Heywood (selected poems)

Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow:

#### 109 VIATICUM

*Birago Diop (Senegal)*

- In one of the three jugs  
the three jugs where on certain evenings return  
the tranquil souls,  
the breaths of the ancestors,  
5 the ancestors who were men,  
the ancestors who were sages,  
Mother has dipped three fingers  
three fingers of her left hand:  
thumb, forefinger and middle finger

10 I have dipped three fingers  
 three fingers of my right hand:  
 thumb, forefinger and middle finger.  
 With her three fingers red with blood,  
 with dog's blood,  
 15 with bull's blood,  
 with goat's blood,  
 Mother has touched me three times.  
 She touched my forehead with her thumb,  
 with her forefinger my left breast  
 20 and my navel with her middle finger.  
 I have held out my fingers red with blood,  
 with dog's blood,  
 with bull's blood,  
 with goat's blood,  
 25 I have held my three fingers to the winds  
 the north wind, the east wind,  
 the south wind, the west wind;  
 and I have raised my three fingers towards the Moon  
 towards the full Moon, the full, naked Moon  
 30 when she was at the bottom of the biggest jug.  
 I have thrust my three fingers into the sand,  
 into the sand which had grown cool.  
 Mother said: 'Go through the World, go  
 in Life. They will follow thy traces.'  
 35 Since then I go,  
 I go by the tracks,  
 by the tracks and on the roads,  
 beyond the sea and further still  
 beyond the sea and further, further still,  
 40 beyond the sea and beyond the place beyond.  
 And when I come to the wicked men,  
 the black-hearted men,  
 when I come to the envious,  
 the black-hearted men,  
 45 before me advance the breaths of the forefathers.

5. (a) Comment on the religious nature of the poem. (5)  
 (b) How does choice of words highlight the importance of the ancestors? (10)  
 (c) What sentiments are expressed in lines 41, 42, 43 and 44? (5)  
 (d) What aspects of negritude are reflected in this poem? [10]
6. Using some of the poems you have studied on the course, discuss how African written poetry features oral traditions and oral poetry. [30]
7. Some poetry from Africa is revolutionary and expresses anger and disappointment at what European colonization did to Africa. Using some poems you have studied in this course discuss this view. [30]