

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION
JULY, 2017

COURSE CODE: ENG405 / IDE-ENG 405
COURSE NAME: COMPARATIVE LITERATURE
TIME ALLOWED: TWO HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Answer TWO questions, one from each section.
2. Make sure you proofread your work to eliminate grammatical and conventional errors and thus avoid losing marks.
3. This paper is 5 pages, cover page included.

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SECTION A: POETRY

Question 1

Where the African American poet betrays a quest for identity and cultural heritage, this is not the case with the South African poet who seems secure in his/her cultural sphere.

Discuss this observation in relation to the two poems below. Include *tone* and *mood* in your discussion. [30]

“Afro-American Fragment” Langston Hughes

So long,
So far away
Is Africa
Not even memories alive—
Save those that history books create,
Save those that songs
Beat back into the blood —
Beat out of blood with words sad-sung
In strange un-Negro tongue —
So long,
So far away
Is Africa

Subdued and time-lost
Are the drums — and yet
Through some vast mist of race
There comes this song
I do not understand,
This song of atavistic land,
Of bitter yearnings lost
Without a place —
So long,
So far away
Is Africa's
Dark face.

“My Name” Magoleng was Selepe

Look what they have done to my name...
the wonderful name of my great-great-grandmothers
Nomgqibelo Ncamisile Mnqhibisa.

The burly bureaucrat was surprised.
What he heard was music to his ears:
'Wat is daai, sê nou weer?'
'I am from Chief Daluxolo Velayigodle of ema-
Mpodweni
and my name is Nomgqhibelo Mnqhibisa.'

Messiah, help me!
My name is so simple
and yet so meaningful,
but to this man it is trash...

He gives me a name
Convenient enough to answer his whim:
I end up being
Maria...
I...
Nomgqibelo Ncamisile Mnqhibisa.

Question 2

Read the poems below and answer the questions that follow them:

"Now that he is safely dead" Carl W. Hines

Now that he is safely dead
let us praise him
build monuments to his glory
sing hosannas to his name.

Dead men make
such convenient heroes: They
cannot rise
to challenge the images
we would fashion from their lives.

And besides,
it is easier to build monuments
than to make a better world.

So, now that he is safely dead
we, with eased consciences
will teach our children
that he was a great man... knowing

that the cause for which he lived
is still a cause
and the dream for which he died
is still a dream,
a dead man's dream.

"The Birth of Shaka" Mbuyiseni Mtshali

His baby cry
was of a cub
tearing the neck
of the lioness
because he was fatherless.

The gods
boiled his blood
in a clay pot of passion —
to course in his veins.

His heart was shaped into an ox shield
to foil every foe.

Ancestors forged
his muscles into
thongs as tough
as wattle bark
and nerves
as sharp as
syringa thorns.

His eyes were lanterns
that shone from the dark valleys of Zululand
to see white swallows
coming across the sea.
His cry to two assassin brothers:

'Lo! you can kill me
but you'll never rule this land!'

- a) Summarise the situation presented by each poem. [8]
- b) Comparatively discuss the two poets' attitude towards heroism. [12]
- c) Discuss how in each case, the poem's diction and tone seem to support his viewpoint.
[10]

SECTION B: PROSE AND DRAMA

Question 3

A Raisin in the Sun Lorraine Hansberry
Coconut Kopano Matlwa

Comparatively discuss Hansberry and Matlwa's views on Christianity by focusing on the following characters' observations or actions: Beneatha, Mama, Tshepo, Fikile and Gogo. [30]

Question 4

Dog Eat Dog Niq Mhlongo
Coconut
A Raisin in the Sun —

By focusing on either two or all three texts, discuss how the recurrent theme of poverty is advanced by each author. [30]
