

CHANGE AND TRADITION FINAL EXAM, SPRING 2004

CHOOSE TWO QUESTIONS

Read the questions carefully and think about them before you decide which ones to answer. You have up to two hours to complete the exam. Organize your answers. Write as fully and precisely as you can. **In each of your answers cite examples from specific texts in both units studied this semester.**

To the best of your abilities, your two essays together should demonstrate

- knowledge of terms and concepts that are significant to each culture we have studied;
 - familiarity with the historical development of each culture, as well as the major concepts, values, and images embodied in selected primary texts from each culture;
 - ability to draw comparisons between and among cultures, with particular reference to the main topics of the syllabus.
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1. The democratic nations of Western Europe practiced the imperial domination of African nations and peoples in the 20th century despite preaching, in their different ways, the ideals of the French Revolution—namely, liberty, equality, and fraternity. Drawing on the materials studied in the course this semester, write an essay in which you explain how the Western Europeans justified this apparent contradiction between their ideals and their actual behavior.
2. It is possible for people to agree that a society needs to be changed without agreeing about how that change should be accomplished. Some critics advocate radical approaches (“revolution”), others favor more moderate approaches (“reform,” “renewal”). Write an essay in which you show how this issue is presented and debated in **three** of the following works, including at least one African work:

Beaumarchais, *The Marriage of Figaro*;
Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*
Turgenev, *Fathers and Sons*
Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*
Soyinka, *Death and the King's Horseman*

3. Several of the works we have read this semester explore the results of policies that deny certain peoples or communities fundamental rights and liberties. Choose one or two texts from each of the two course-units and compare and contrast the ways in which the author explores both the impact of such policies and the responses of those who were victimized by them.
4. The liberty traditionally allowed to a male aristocrat to have sexual relations with a woman of his choosing without a long-term commitment on his part is portrayed in three works studied this semester: *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Fathers and Sons*, and *Death and the King's Horseman*. Describe, compare and contrast the three relationships, including the outcome of each. Why were Beaumarchais, Turgenev and Soyinka interested in this subject? Were they interested in it for the same reason(s)?
5. The role of the spiritual world (religion) in society changed greatly in modern times in the cultures we studied this semester. Describe, compare, and contrast how God or the gods, religious or spiritual beliefs, and religious institutions and rituals are viewed by **four** of the following, including at least one African figure: Bazarov, Marx, Darwin, Okonkwo, Elesin, Primo Levi.
6. In *Things Fall Apart* Obierika's eldest brother says, “But what is good in one place is bad in another place,” and Uchendu agrees saying, “There is no story that is not true.” Explain the point that Achebe is making. Then discuss and compare the attitude which **four** of the following six characters or authors would take toward this way of viewing the world: Figaro, Bazarov, Primo Levi, Slavenka Drakulic, Okonkwo, Olunde.