

# CENTRAL UNIVERSITY



**END-OF-SECOND SEMESTER EXAMINATION: 2016/2017**

**FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
VISION AND LEGACY UNIT  
CUVH 204 UNDERSTANDING AFRICAN SOCIETIES  
SESSION: MORNING/AFTERNOON/EVENING/WEEKEND  
Date: June 2017  
TIME ALLOWED: 2 HOURS**

STUDENT ID No..... Student's Signature.....

Date..... Campus..... Section.....

### INSTRUCTIONS:

All Answers to SECTION A Should be Written in the Answer Booklet to be Provided Before the Start of the Exam. Each of these Answers should be transferred or Shaded on the SCANTRON paper provided.

**DO NOT TURN OVER THIS PAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE BEEN TOLD TO DO SO BY THE INVIGILATOR**

COURSE LECTURER: Rev. Christopher K. Kribeti

## SECTION A – MULTIPLE CHOICE (40 MARKS)

Select the best option for your answer. Each question in this section carries 1 mark.

1. All of the following are true about sacrifices, except...
  - a. it facilitates one's intention to project himself into the invisible world.
  - d. it offers a reclusive atmosphere for the traditional worshippers.
  - b. it offers people the means to draw the attention of God to their needs.
  - c. its major purpose is sacrifices and offerings is to maintain right relationship with God.
  
2. "Help me. O Almighty. Help me." This saying among Akan traditional people is an example of a/an... This reflects their belief in the Supreme Being.
  - a. invocation.
  - b. prayer.
  - c. songs.
  - d. worship.
  
3. "You are not an unforgiving God, God of our forefathers. Your assistance is not temporary. You are almighty. Let all evil men fall before you." This extract is an example of... in the Akan traditional society.
  - a. invocation.
  - b. prayer.
  - c. songs.
  - d. worship.
  
4. The belief that spirits have power to turn things into small objects and through incantations, spirit them away, shows a strong sense of Africans belief in...
  - a. magic and medicine.
  - b. spirits beings and deities.
  - c. the ancestors.
  - d. the Supreme Being.
  
5. Why do traditional Africans fear evil spirits, ghosts, witches among others?
  - a. They are capable to conjure war and famine.
  - b. They are dishonest to the worshipping community.
  - c. They can stir hatred for wicked people.
  - d. They can spellbind people.
  
6. A significant landmark in traditional Africans' encounter with Christianity is...
  - a. democracy.
  - b. education.
  - c. moral reasoning.
  - d. Western ethics.
  
7. African ethical communitarians belief that western individualism inherited in traditional Africa is as a result of...
  - a. Western education and culture.
  - b. Western colonialism.
  - c. Western philosophy.
  - d. Western trade.

8. African community is inclusive because Africans think in... categories.
- 'neither nor'
  - 'I'
  - 'either or'
  - 'both and'
9. Moral reasoning is a... in which an individual makes rational decisions concerning morality without forgetting that one is a member of a community.
- decision
  - obligation
  - process
  - skill
10. In African ethics, it is believed that an individual's morality affects the... of the community.
- conducts
  - future
  - interrelatedness
  - well-being
11. In communitarian ethics, reclaiming the lost centrality of community living will provide the church all the following, except...
- ecumenism.
  - individual pursuit.
  - inter-religious dialogue.
  - theological ethics.
12. The bases of the human rights endeavour after the Second World War spans from...
- convocation of individual.
  - group autonomy.
  - group decisions.
  - the protection of the individual autonomy.
13. In traditional Africa, there is no individuality without the community. This means...
- the community is an *a priori*.
  - the individual and the community are suppositional reality.
  - the individual and the community are inseparable.
  - either individuality or the community is opposed to the other.
14. Individuality is expressed in traditional African society from the moment of... in the ritual of...
- birth; death rites
  - birth; name-giving
  - name-giving; death rites
  - puberty; initiation
15. What is the purpose of initiation among many African people? It helps the newly initiated to...
- become development minded.
  - grow quickly.
  - integrate moral norms of the community.
  - take up change of one's life.
16. Five areas of ethical concerns in the life of the individual and society include religion, the mystery of life and death, domestic and social virtues, sex and sexuality, and...
- conflict resolution.
  - community settlement.
  - forms of self-identity.
  - worship and dance.

17. Ethically, the gods visiting their anger on the traditional community shows, they have the sanction what is...
- carnal.
  - criminal.
  - moral.
  - superfluous.
18. When traditional folks placated their gods with food and drinks, they did that to...
- establish new patterns in appeasing the gods and invoking their power.
  - establish the rule of law.
  - mend their broken relationship with the gods and called for their blessings.
  - stimulate new social relations.
19. Which one of the following is the most frequent reason for divorce in traditional African societies.
- adultery.
  - death.
  - childlessness.
  - lust and fornication.
20. Which one is the odd one out?
- Children help their parents at home and on the farm
  - Children were gifts from God.
  - One's own children will see to the smooth burial of their parents when they die.
  - The birth of children proved the couples are blessed by the gods.
21. A woman in an Akan society, after giving birth to her first child, is considered as...
- blessed.
  - coming of age.
  - responsible.
  - to be favoured.
22. In some African traditional societies, the worst thing that can happen to a woman is her...
- inability to thank the gods.
  - love for positions.
  - misunderstanding of children.
  - being barren.
23. "*Okatakyi Brempong, Leader of men. Linguist of all gods. You know the deep and see what comes. The rest of the fight is in your hands. Okatakyi my praises of you will never end.*" This prayer shows that the seeker...
- has obtained the approval of the god, *Okatakyi Brempong*.
  - is engaging *Okatakyi Brempong* to fight on her behalf.
  - knows *Okatakyi Brempong* is the greatest in the pantheon of the Akan gods.
  - needs *Okatakyi Brempong's* help.
24. "Africans are notoriously religious," depicts that...
- Africans do better in religion.
  - Africans love to practice religion.
  - religion describes the existence of Africans.
  - religion is linked to Africans.
25. In traditional African society both the sacred and secular are...

- a. well defined separately.
  - b. one and same.
  - c. independent of each other.
  - d. dichotomized.
26. Traditional African religion can be well appreciated from the perspective of the following, except the...
- a. ethics and morals.
  - b. folklores.
  - c. proverbs.
  - d. sacred writings.
27. Worldviews can broadly be classified as...
- a. material and religious.
  - b. spiritual and terrestrial.
  - c. supernatural and terrestrial.
  - d. visible and invisible.
28. In an African traditional community, the cause of a plague [such as disease, famine, fire outbreak, etc.] would seriously be considered as the gods wreaking vengeance. This is an example of a/an...
- a. ancestral curse.
  - b. religious worldview.
  - c. established worldview.
  - d. visible worldview.
29. This sort of worldview, as mentioned in question 28, mostly call for...
- a. consultation of oracles and pacification of ancestral spirits.
  - b. corporate mourning and ritual performances.
  - c. invocations, prayers, singing and dancing.
  - d. peace settlement.
30. The centrality of the universe in African tradition is provided by the existence of...
- a. God.
  - b. human beings.
  - c. the ancestors.
  - d. the unborn.
31. African religion is "traditional" because it is...
- a. a fossil religion.
  - b. imported into Africa.
  - c. originating from their environment and on their soil.
  - d. revealed in the manner of western/eastern religions.
32. "The elders should take the initiative if they are worthy of being the leaders of men." One of the following is not a good illustration of the quote above as regard Ghanaian traditional worldview.
- a. Age is disassociated with the degree of wisdom a person possesses to influence the group.
  - b. Collective decision making is a cherished attribute.
  - c. The opinions of the young are held as fruitless and devoid of wisdom.
  - d. Wisdom rested in the bosom of the elderly.
33. When an Akan say, "We must try and keep in touch as human beings should do." It suggests...

- a. one party has become bitter over a protracted grudge.
  - b. one party has withdrawn reciprocating mutual concern for the other.
  - c. one should not become an animal, which does not understand human feelings.
  - d. there is a broken friendship.
34. The following are shortcomings of oral transmission of history from one generation to another, except...
- a. experience distortions.
  - b. experience exaggerations.
  - c. experience formalization.
  - d. experience modifications.
35. The myths, liturgies, songs and systematic recitals among others...
- a. answers the residual philosophy of Africans.
  - b. offer sources for academic deliberation.
  - c. show the animistic past of Africa.
  - d. reveal the future of African people.
36. Time in traditional African society is...
- a. cyclical.
  - b. futuristic.
  - c. linear.
  - d. sparse.
37. According to traditional African concept, time is mainly a...
- a. three-dimensional experience: life, death and eternity.
  - b. three-dimensional phenomenon: past, present and future.
  - c. two-dimensional experience: life and death.
  - d. two-dimensional phenomenon: past and present.
38. In many traditional African societies when a person accomplishes the whole process of physical birth, naming ceremonies, puberty and initiation rites, and finally marriage, he/she is regarded as a/an...
- a. elder.
  - b. full human beings.
  - c. mature person.
  - d. ripe for leadership.
39. The kings, queens and chiefs in traditional African societies serve as custodians of the... of people.
- a. lives
  - b. forest
  - c. lands
  - d. tradition
40. The kings, queens and chiefs are highly respected as the traditional rulers and leaders of the people because they...
- a. are not applicable.
  - b. are specially born to lead the community.
  - c. lead the people and ensure their security.
  - d. occupy the 'stool' or 'skin' of the ancestors.

**SECTION B CASE STUDIES [50 MARKS]**

*Read the cases in this section carefully and with your knowledge of Understanding African Societies answer the questions that follow. Each question in this section carries 1 mark.*

**CASE STUDY ONE**

It is obvious that there are many different cultures, and many differences within cultures in sub-Saharan Africa. Historic developments, demographic and ecological differences, as well as economic opportunities, colonial impact and religious missionary activities, to mention but a few factors, have resulted in a diversity of lifestyles, professional practices, values, religions and knowledge systems. Africa has a diversity of ecosystems, ranging from extensive mountain areas, savannah and dry land areas, to lowlands, coastal plains and tropical forests. Nomadic peoples often compete for land and water resources with sedentary peoples. The urban population is increasing and a considerable number of large cities exist. Traditional religions have common elements, but there is also a great variation in rituals, traditional institutions and leadership structures. They are often combined with, or have been replaced by Christianity or Islam. As a result, a great number of different religious denominations can be observed.

41. Lines (L1) 1-2 disclose that traditional West African cultures are not...
  - a. heterogeneous.
  - b. homogeneous.
  - c. sacrosanct.
  - d. unilateral.
42. "Economic opportunities" and "colonial impact" used in ll. 2 and 3 suggest that...
  - a. Africans look elsewhere for greener pastures.
  - b. African societies have been well improved.
  - c. cultural contacts have occurred between Africa and the rest of the world.
  - d. significant growth patterns have taken place in Africa.
43. Three conceptual elements of modernity that have impacted traditional West African cultures can be classed as follows...
  - a. colonization, development and globalisation.
  - b. development, religion and colonisation.
  - c. globalisation, colonisation and religion.
  - d. religion, globalisation and development.
44. The mention of "religious missionary activities" reveal an...
  - a. interaction between African religion and non-African religious philosophies.
  - b. interaction between Christianity and Islam.
  - c. interaction among indigenous African cultures.
  - d. not applicable.
45. The existence of large cities in West African countries today are as a result of...
  - a. proliferation of new religions.
  - b. the rise of Nomadic lifestyle.
  - c. traditional institutions and leadership structures.
  - d. urbanisation.
46. The mention of "Nomadic Peoples" and "Sedentary Peoples" shows that economic livelihood in West African communities were predominantly derived from...
  - a. commercial activities.
  - b. industrial activities.
  - c. pastoral and agrarian activities.
  - d. technological activities.

## CASE STUDY TWO

Yet, sub-Saharan Africa has a lot in common, as its peoples have known a great number of migrations across the continent. Although there are more than a thousand ethnic groups, many of them have similar origins or historic relationships. The population has a predominantly rural background, and even today agriculture remains to be the main occupation. Many African soils are aged and tend to be quite poor, which combined with a harsh climate, makes agriculture a difficult and low productive activity.

47. This case mentions... as a significant source of modernisation in West Africa.
- agriculture
  - communal living
  - ethnicity
  - migration
48. Which is the odd one out?
- Africans, nevertheless, have well-mechanized methods of farming.
  - Africans remain the leading producers of agriculture.
  - The numerous ethnic groups in Africa today continue to hamper development.
  - Though the main economic gain of Africa is agriculture, land fertility issues coupled with cruel climatic conditions curtail its production.
49. In traditional communities, economic life was regulated as a/an...
- communal affair.
  - time to make money.
  - time to display wealth.
  - time for take good stock of personal possessions.

## CASE STUDY THREE

The colonial past has had a strong impact on the indigenous cultures and peoples, limiting their capacity to solve their own problems and develop technologies and skills that serve their own needs. Colonisation left the continent with a low level of literacy, few educated people, and with poor physical and institutional infrastructure. The most productive agricultural lands, forestry and mineral resources have been, and often still are, exploited by entrepreneurs with a colonial background. Most of the present nations, those that exist less than 50 years, still reflect major aspects of the colonial system rather than the pre-colonial indigenous systems of governance. The same holds for the legal system and the education system. The religions of the colonisers and missionaries over the past centuries, though they introduced alien concepts and rituals, have not been able to suppress the value attached to ancestors, funerals, and a host of other traditional practices. Most health practices in rural Africa today are based on traditional healers and knowledge, using a wide range of herbs and rituals.

50. Most traditional Ghanaian cultures believed their dead ancestors return home during festivities; they showed this belief by...
- hosting special drumming sessions for them.
  - mourning and cooking for them.
  - performing traditional acrobatics to entertain them.
  - prodding the conscience of the ancestors.
51. Which one of the following is most accurate about funeral rites in traditional Akan societies?
- All funeral attendees were expected to mourn the dead.
  - Funeral rites brought families together.
  - Relatives and mourners were not expected to eat until the final burial rite was over.
  - The quality of life an individual lived in the society were attenuated with its funeral rites.



52. The inability of West African nations to resolve their internal dilemma and develop technologies and skills to situate themselves are attributed to their...
- colonial history.
  - cultural history.
  - educational history.
  - illiteracy history.
53. In what ways is colonisation blamed for under development in Africa?
- The collapse of traditional trade and rise of multi-national companies.
  - The modernisation of African communities.
  - The presence of high illiteracy level and infrastructure development.
  - The rise of high literacy levels and bad governance.
54. Modern West African states are said to be unable to... their governance and political systems.
- decolonise
  - galvanise
  - promote
  - synergise
55. The mention of "pre-colonial indigenous systems of governance" refers to the era when...
- African nations were preparing for independence.
  - chiefs, queens and kings were reigning.
  - Europeans were arriving in Ghana.
  - new politicians were coming to power.
56. In traditional Africa, education took the form of...
- observation, participation and action.
  - pondering, reading and writing.
  - reading, reciting and writing.
  - role play and research.
57. Western religious activities have been unable to suppress major African beliefs like ancestor veneration, rites of passage, etc. because these religions are considered as...
- foreign.
  - harsh.
  - impulsive.
  - too modern.
58. The use of "a wide range of herbs and rituals" disclose Africans belief in...
- ancestors.
  - magic and medicine.
  - spirits.
  - the Supreme Being.

#### CASE STUDY FOUR

Africa is changing fast and there exists a mix of dominantly traditional, dominantly modern and more hybrid subcultures. Some aspects of indigenous knowledge are expressed openly, whilst other aspects are secretive and hidden from outsiders. Many studies about African worldviews and indigenous knowledge either stress the positive aspects, or strive to show the limitations and negative aspects. The first written anthropological studies on Africa often included biases and Eurocentric prejudices, which, in part, have been corrected later. Romanticising indigenous knowledge, however, is not a good basis for endogenous development either. Phenomena such as taboos against planting trees, gross inequalities between men and women, land use practices that have detrimental ecological effects, and misuse of their position and knowledge by local leaders, are aspects which need to be observed and brought into the intercultural dialogue.

59. Initial studies carried out on traditional African religion were done from the perspective of...
- cultural practitioners.
  - Pan-Africanists.
  - Social entrepreneurs
  - Western anthropologists.
60. Gender inequality in Africa today results from...
- cultural practices.
  - economic arrangement.
  - religious tradition.
  - societal construct.
61. Traditional leadership structure in West Africa is mainly...
- autocratic.
  - democratic.
  - hierarchical.
  - oligarchy.
62. Reference to "local leaders" in the case reveals a system of governance in traditional African communities. How was democracy exhibited in this system of governance?
- It was exhibited at every level through the participation of men and women in community discussions.
  - It was exhibited when the local leaders sit to discuss funeral rites
  - It was exhibited at the palace.
  - It was only exhibited at communal activities level.
63. Communal rituals were ushered and performed by the... for the protection and the progression of the community.
- clan heads
  - chiefs
  - diviners and prophets
  - priestesses
64. In African traditional religion, the community was organised for the purposes of social cohesion and...
- mourning.
  - cultural practices, rituals.
  - politics and military defence.
  - economic gains and industrialisation.
65. Which one of the following is the goal for the existence of traditional communities? The community...
- came to the aid of the slothful from time to time.
  - denied daring individuals of their economic lots.
  - ensured the safety of people and property.
  - promoted parochial interests.

**SECTION C ESSAY [10 MARKS]**

Answer only one question from this section in not more than two pages.

- Q1.** Choose any **one** (1) of each of the following festivals (Adaekese Festival, Akwasidae Tuntum Festival, Homowo Festival, Asafotufiami Festival, and Damba Festival) indicate the;
- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| (i) Location/Place,                             | [2 marks] |
| (ii) Persons involved,                          | [2 marks] |
| (iii) Physical Description,                     | [3 marks] |
| (iv) Purpose of Festival Rite in the community. | [3 marks] |
- Q2.** (a.) List **three** (3) ways of choosing a priest or priestess in traditional African society and show what it meant to be called a priest or priestess?  
[4 marks]
- (b.) Briefly explain the **three** (3) expressions used in Akan for the calling of traditional priests or priestesses.  
[6 marks]
- Q3.** Giving appropriate examples, explain five elements that form the central tenets of African religion and philosophy?  
[10 marks]