

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Beyond the Borders of the Blue: Decoding World Literature's Global Soul for Undergrads

Synthesize the intersection of socio-political upheaval and aesthetic innovation through comparative analysis of Caribbean, North African, and Eastern European masterpieces.

1. In Aimé Césaire's 'Notebook of a Return to the Native Land', how does the concept of 'Négritude' function as a subversion of European surrealist aesthetics?

Answer: B) It utilizes the irrational to reclaim a suppressed African identity from colonial logic.

Césaire co-opted surrealist techniques—like the juxtaposition of disparate images—to facilitate a radical reclamation of Black identity against the 'rationality' of colonial oppression.

2. The 1988 Nobel Laureate Naguib Mahfouz is often credited with adapting the _____ novel form to the nuances of the Egyptian Cairene social landscape.

Answer: B) Naturalistic

Mahfouz, particularly in his early and middle periods, utilized European naturalism to provide a microscopic, often bleakly realistic view of social hierarchies in Egypt.

3. In Clarice Lispector's 'The Hour of the Star', the narrator Rodrigo S.M. represents an objective, omniscient voice that refuses to intervene in Macabéa's narrative.

Answer: B) False

Rodrigo S.M. is a self-conscious, intrusive narrator whose existential crises and struggles with the act of writing are central to the novella's metafictional structure.

4. How does Wole Soyinka's play 'Death and the King's Horseman' critique the 'clash of cultures' trope frequently found in postcolonial studies?

Answer: B) By characterizing the conflict as a failure of the metaphysical transition rather than just colonial intervention.

Soyinka explicitly warned in his preface that the play is more than a cultural clash; it investigates the ontological failure of Elesin to fulfill a spiritual duty.

5. Milan Kundera's 'The Unbearable Lightness of Being' utilizes the philosophical concept of _____ to contrast the gravity of political commitment with the fragility of individual existence.

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Answer: B) Eternal Recurrence

Kundera opens the novel with a reflection on Nietzsche's Eternal Recurrence, arguing that if life only happens once, it possesses a 'lightness' that can be both liberating and terrifying.

6. Which literary device is most prevalent in Lu Xun's 'A Madman's Diary' to symbolize the predatory nature of traditional Confucian society?

Answer: B) Cannibalism

Lu Xun uses the 'madman's' fearful realization that his neighbors are man-eaters as a sharp allegory for the dehumanizing effects of feudalistic traditions in China.

7. Alejo Carpentier's 'The Kingdom of This World' is a foundational text for 'lo real maravilloso', which differs from surrealism by grounding magic in the faith and history of the Americas.

Answer: A) True

Carpentier argued that while Surrealism was an academic exercise of forced juxtaposition, the history of the Caribbean was inherently 'marvelous' due to its syncretic myths and landscapes.

8. In the context of the South Asian Diaspora, the term _____ refers to the hybridity and 'in-betweenness' experienced by characters in the works of authors like Jhumpa Lahiri.

Answer: B) Liminality

Liminality describes the threshold state of characters who navigate two disparate cultures without feeling fully anchored in either.

9. Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of 'carnavalesque' is best applied to which world literature masterwork to explain its disruption of social hierarchy and linguistic norms?

Answer: B) Gargantua and Pantagruel by François Rabelais

Bakhtin developed the theory of the carnivalesque specifically by analyzing Rabelais, focusing on the subversion of authority through humor, chaos, and 'the lower bodily stratum'.

10. The 'I-Novel' (Shishōsetsu) in Japanese literature is characterized by its strict adherence to fictional world-building and the avoidance of the author's personal life.

Answer: B) False

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The 'I-Novel' is defined by the opposite: it is an autobiographical form where the narrative is expected to transparently reflect the author's direct experience and inner life.