

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**  
**SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURAL, EARTH & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES**  
**DISCIPLINE OF GEOGRAPHY**  
**EXAMINATION: MAY/JUNE 2012**  
**MODULE NAME & CODE: CONCEPTS AND METHODS IN GEOGRAPHY,**  
**GEOG700**

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**DURATION: 3 HOURS**

**TOTAL MARKS: 300**

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**INTERNAL EXAMINER: PROF B MAHARAJ**  
**EXTERNAL EXAMINER: PROF S OLDFIELD, UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN**

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**INSTRUCTIONS: THIS PAPER CONSISTS OF TWO PAGES.**  
**ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS.**  
**ANSWER ONE QUESTION FROM SECTION A AND ONE**  
**QUESTION FROM SECTION B, AND THE THIRD QUESTION**  
**FROM EITHER SECTION A OR SECTION B.**

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**Section A: Concepts**

1. Maps served as both instruments and representations of expanding European influence into Africa during the nineteenth century. Geographers contributed to empire building by promoting, assisting, and legitimating the projection of European power. Critically assess this statement with reference to the complicity of geographers and mapping in the colonial project, supporting your answer with examples.
2. Do you agree with Smith's (1984:117) view that "most geography is inconsequential claptrap, and never more so than during the quantitative revolution. How can we take it all so seriously, when it contributes so little to the improvement of the human condition?" Critically assess this statement with reference to the impact of the quantitative revolution on geography, referring to examples.
3. The challenges that influenced the rise of radical geography in the 1960s are still present in far more dangerous and mutated forms. Discuss the factors influencing the development of radical geography. Comment on relevance of radical geography in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
4. Geographers need to recognise the profound ways in which the world and our understandings of it are gendered, especially since the discipline has privileged a masculine subject position. Discuss with reference to the factors influencing the development of gender geography, its major theoretical influences, and research themes.

5. Postmodernism is viewed as being 'emancipatory' because of its opposition to the dominance of 'grand theories' or 'meta-narratives'. However, it also creates an atmosphere in which 'anything goes'. Critically assess this statement with reference to the impact of postmodernism on geographical thought, referring to examples.
6. According to Wesso (1994: 331) "the oppressed in South Africa were never permitted a concerted geographic voice. They were colonised into the belief that geography mattered not to them, that geography was made by whites for whites". Critically discuss this statement with reference to the historical and contemporary developments within the discipline of Geography in South Africa.

### **Section B: Research Methods**

7. Do you agree with the view that quantitative methods will always have an important role to play in both human and physical geography? Critically assess the range of quantitative techniques available for geographic research, clearly identifying their relevance, as well as their strengths and weaknesses.
8. "People-centred methodologies involved coming to terms with a subjectivity in how research is conducted, an explicitness about people's involvement and an emphasis on how research is communicated and shared" (Rodaway, 2006:270). Discuss this approach with reference to the adoption of various qualitative methods in geography, highlighting strengths and weaknesses of each.
9. Mixed method research strategies have the potential to see the phenomena under study from different perspectives, often crossing the qualitative and quantitative divide, and this may contribute to a fuller understanding of the problem in question. Do you agree with this view? Discuss with reference to examples.
10. Geographers have become increasingly interested in questions of ethics. There has been some focus on the place of ethical reflection in geographical theory and practice, and the potential role geography could play in the arena of ethics. Critically assess this interest in ethics and how it could engender new forms of engagement and responsibility in the discipline.
11. Write a research proposal for approval by the University's Higher Degrees' Committee. Your proposal must include an aim, objectives, geographical relevance, theoretical context, key literature and methodology.