



ORAL & WRITTEN AFRICAN LITERATURE: IDEAS, THEMES AND MEANINGS

APA Program: Dakar Summer

Language of instruction: French

US semester credits: 4.0

Term: Summer 2019

Instructors: Part 1 - Oral Literature: Ndiabou Séga Toure Gueye, Lecturer | Cheikh Anta Diop University

Part 2 - Written Literature: Mamadou Ba, Lecturer | Cheikh Anta Diop University

Course Description

Course in two parts concentrating alternately on written literature and oral literature:

- The purpose of this section on written literature is to navigate the texts, the excerpts of emblematic works, to analyze and study the statements made by this literature of the hot and urgent questions of the present day. The themes of cultural identity, the place of Africa in history, the European adventure, the process of colonialism, the disillusionment of independence and finally the emergence of the voices of women and migrants will be addressed. The emphasis will also be placed on the narrative and stylistic specificities of these texts.

The section of oral literature invites one to discover and explore the literary forms woven in African languages and closely associated with the profound life of traditional societies.

The course will initiate an introduction to methods of approach and analysis of oral texts (tales-myths-epics-funny stories) addressed in their own cultural context, in a situation of performance, as well as their resurgence, in other forms, in a contemporary urban environment.

As part of the course, meetings are planned with renowned speakers, specialists on the topics covered:

- Oral Literature: Professor Mamoussé Diagne covering the theme "Civilization of the Orality" and M. Lamane Mbaye.
- Written Literature: The writers Boubacar Boris Diop and Aminata Sow Fall.

Course Objectives

The overall objective is to collectively construct the skills of reading, analyzing and understanding to apprehend, in its two verses (oral and written), the specific meanings, stakes and scope of a literature as rich as fruitful, mirror of a rapidly changing society.

Schedule

Oral Literature

Week 1

Class 1 - The Griot (A West African Storyteller)

- The role of the griot in the society of Oral Tradition
 - Works: Excerpt from *Soundjata ou l'épopée mandingue* by D. T. Niane
- Oral literature in action: the concept of performance
 - Works: Performances of griots
- Procedures specific to Orality
 - Works: excerpt from *Soundjata ou l'épopée mandingue* by D. T. Niane and *La cuiller sale* by Birago Diop

Class 2 - The Notion of Gender in Oral Literature

- Study of several oral genres
 - Work: Proverbs, oral poetry (songs), storytelling
- Study of the evolution of oral genre towards a genre of written literature, the "nouvelle"
 - Works: Excerpt from *Sarzan* by Birago Diop

Week 2

Class 3 - The Tale and the Myth

- Description of Myth and Tales
 - Pedagogical resources: critical texts
- Study of the relationship between Myth and Tale
 - Works: *Le serpent du Wagadou*

Class 4 - The Epic

- The Epic, a symphony of genres
 - Works: excerpts from *Soundjata*
- The remnants of the Epic: the genealogical song and the motto
 - Works: passages from genealogical chants and the mottos of their fighters

Week 3

Class 5 - The So-Called "Short" Genres

- The Proverb
 - Works: proverbs presented and studied in context.
- Short narrative genres: funny stories and "scary" stories (rumors)
 - Works: *L'histoire du chauffeur de taxi et du noctambule*
- The evolution of short narrative genres
 - Works: Funny written stories
 - Support: printed documents

Class 6 - Oral Poetry Conclusion: The Concept of Neo-Literature in the Context of Orality

- Traditional oral poetry
 - Works: Occasional songs, ritual songs
- Modern oral poetry: slam, hip hop, mbalakh
 - Works: slam, hip-hop and mbalakh texts

- From one generation to the next, the links between urban youth movements and the modern Senegalese folk song
 - Works: excerpts of text from the album *Bataillon blindé*

Written Literature

Week 4

Class 1 - The Origins of African Literature: The Poetry of the Negritude

- Sartre: *Orphée noir*
- Senghor: *Femme noire*
- David Diop: *Afrique, mon Afrique*

Class 2 - The Novel of Manners

- Camara Laye: *L'enfant noir*
- Ousmane Socé: *Karim*
- Abdoulaye Sadji: *Maimouna*

Week 5

Class 3 - European Adventure and Meeting of Cultures: An Integral Study of C. H. Kane, *Ambiguous Adventure*

- Excerpt: *La nuit du Coran*
- Excerpt: *Le Balafon crevé*
- Abdoulaye Sadji: *Maimouna*

Class 4 - The Trial of Colonialism

- Ferdinand Oyono: *Une Vie de boy*
- Ferdinand Oyono: *Le Vieux Nègre et la médaille*

Week 6

Class 5 - The Novel of Disenchantment: An Integral Study of Abraham Kebede, *Les Soleils des indépendances*

- Excerpts: *Les lendemains qui déchantent*
- Excerpts: *Le discours du Président*
- Excerpts: *L'investissement humain*

Class 6 - Voices of Women and Migrant Writings

- Mariama Ba: *Une si longue lettre*
- Fatou Diome: *Le Ventre de l'Atlantique*

Assessment

Oral Literature (50%)

- Continuous assessment: Text analysis and commentary
- Final exam: works presented in the form of presentations

Written Literature (50%)

- Continuous assessment in the form of explanations of text, summaries, lectures and mini-final memoire.

Bibliography

Oral Literature

Corpus

Amadou Hampâté Ba

- *Kaïdara, conte initiatique peul*
- *Njeddo Dewal, mère de la Calamité*
- "À l'école du caméléon"

Birago Diop

- *Les contes d'Amadou Koumba*
- *Les nouveaux contes d'Amadou Koumba*

Djibril Tamsir Niane

- *Soundjata, l'épopée mandingue*

Cheikh Charles Sow

- *Cycle de sécheresse*

Critical Works

Amadou Hampâté Ba

- *Aspects de la civilisation africaine, 1972*

Ursula Baumgardt, Jean Derive

- *Littérature africaine et oralité, 2013*

Jean Derive

- *Art du verbe dans l'oralité africaine, 2012*

Written Literature

Corpus

Cheikh Hamidou Kane

- *L'Aventure ambiguë*

Ahmadou Kourouma

- *Les soleils des indépendances*

Mariama Ba

- *Les soleils des indépendances*

Critical Works

Lilian Kesteloot

- *Anthologie des littératures négro-africaines*

Jacques Chevrier

- *Littérature nègre*