

African Literature: Negritude to Fanon and Beyond
Winter Session 2023--Instructor Dorothy Payne

Course Description:

The Negritude Movement swept Africa, Europe, and the Americas in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s as some of Africa's most acclaimed writers, philosophers, intellectuals, and politicians engaged in extraordinary literary efforts towards the liberation of those colonized. None gave voice and leadership more profoundly than the Martinican, French educated psychiatrist, Frantz Fanon, whose impact is once again at the forefront of liberation struggles world-wide. Fanon, and a sampling of other influential thinkers from the movement, will provide the historic and intellectual framework for our reading of select essays and novels which served as visionary blueprints for the transformation of those living under colonial domination—and continue to do so to this day.

Week 1:

Lecture: "What does it mean to colonize a people? An Introduction to the Negritude Movement and Frantz Fanon" (Youtube video: "Negritude Movement", Destini Carmichael)

Week 2:

Reading: Two Poems: Leopold Senghor, "Black Woman", David Diop, "Africa-To My Mother". Aime Cesaire, "Memorandum on My Martinique" (supplemental Handouts)
"Concerning Violence", Chapter 1, Wretched of the Earth, Frantz Fanon (monoskop.org)
(Optional Reading: "Frantz Fanon's Enduring Legacy", Pankaj Mishra. New Yorker Magazine, Nov 28, 2021)
Lecture: "Colonial Alienation"

Week 3:

Reading: The African Child (novel), Camara Laye (Nove)
Lecture: "What does it mean to be an man"

Week 4:

Youtube video: "Talk Africa: A Conversation with Ngugi wa Thiong'o"
(Optional Reading: "Decolonize the Mind", Ngugi wa Thiong'o (CSU-jaipur.edu.in))
Lecture: "What Does it Mean to Colonize a Mind?"

Week 5:

Reading: Things Fall Apart, Chinua Achebe (novel)
(Optional reading: "The Writer and His Community", Chinua Achebe (academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu))
Lecture: "The African Writer and His/Her Community"

Week 6:

Reading: Only this Once are You Immaculate, Blessing Masariri (novel)
Handouts: Henry Dumas, ("Ark of Bones") and Amiri Baraka: "Afro-Surrealism: Embracing and Reconstructing the Absurdity of Right Now", Kiersten Adams (itskierstenadams.medium.com)
Lecture: "Afro-Surrealism and the Black Radical Reality"
Music Video: Youtube music video: "Sun Ra Arkestra: NPR Tiny Desk Concert"