**Francophone Literature II:**

**Exploration of Francophone Cultures in Sub-Saharan Africa**

French 4102D TR 1:35-2:55 347 Boggs

Professor: Michael Wiedorn Office : Swann 222

Office hours: TR 11-12 AM and 3-4PM and by appointment

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**Course Description:**

This course will explore cultures of Sub-Saharan Africa through novels, films, and essays. Our novels will cover the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial historical phases of the region, as well as the three main religious groupings of Christianity, Islam, and animism. The scope of our historical focus will range from the early 20th century to the present, while geographically we will cover topics as diverse as life in African villages in the early days of European colonization and the experiences of Africans who have chosen to live abroad today. Through our readings of scholarly essays by prominent scholars of Africa we will discuss the difficulties, dangers and benefits of engaging with African cultural products in the context of the US academy.

**Course Objectives:**

--To acquire the tools necessary to study literary texts.

--To study literary history at an introductory level.

--To study the role of literature in the evolution of African societies.

--To analyze African history and culture through literature.

**General Goals and Anticipated Outcomes:**

As a result of this course, students will be able to:

--Identify key authors and movements from the Francophone Sub-Saharan African

literary tradition.

--Analyze literary texts from these cultures and discuss what it means to do so.

--Demonstrate knowledge of theoretical questions and problems involved in these artistic

traditions and in the critical study thereof.

**Expectations and Suggestions:**

Daily class attendance is expected. More than two unexcused absences during the semester will affect your course grade. One point will be subtracted from the final course average for each unexcused absence in excess of two.

Please note that *students should come to class each day with two questions to guide discussion.* These questions make up large part of your participation *and* homework grades.

**Grading:**

Participation ..........20%

Presentations and homework..........20%

Composition No. 1..........10%

Composition No. 2......... .10%

Midterm paper (5 pp.)..........20%

Final Paper (with bibliography detailing at least 5 sources)..........20%

**Required Texts:**

Laye, Camara: *L’enfant noir*

Beti, Mongo: *Le pauvre Christ de Bomba*

Bugul, Ken: *Le baobab fou*

Other articles and excerpts are available online.

**General notes:**

Please note that it is your responsibility to know the content of this syllabus. If you are unsure about these instructions please see me for help; otherwise I will assume that you understand the syllabus and you will be held to the standards explained below.

Students are responsible for noting and remembering deadlines. It is not the professor’s responsibility to remind students of deadlines.

Please do not use cell phones during the class period.

On late work: work may be submitted late with a university-sanctioned excuse. If you are turning work in late, please be sure to make that clear to me *before* the deadline. If you cannot meet a deadline, we can establish another deadline for you, but do keep in mind that this deadline must be adhered to. Unexcused late work will lose 5 percentage points each day after the deadline.

Compositions:

Students will submit a one-page paper via email before class starts on the day when the paper is due. Topics are up to students’ discretion. Possible ways of going about this include responses to an assigned question (to be provide on request), exegeses, critiques of certain aspects of the texts, extensions of or responses to our discussions in class, etc. On the whole, students are free to write about what they like, as long as they analyze the texts at hand.

Please keep in mind that these are mini-papers designed to ensure that students are well-prepared to write a final paper. Consequently they must be structured as follows: 1.) Thesis and introduction; 2.) Elaboration of arguments with textual evidence; 3.) Conclusion that returns to the thesis. Or, put otherwise: 1.) Say what you will do; 2.) Do it; 3.) Say what you have done.

On the rewrites: after submitting a paper via email, students will receive a corrected version of their paper. Rather than simply penalizing students for mistakes, the correction will show students where they may have made mistakes and indicate the nature of the mistakes (i.e. accords, spelling, gender etc.). Students will correct the mistakes they have made and submit a final version of their paper a week later. The final version of the paper will be accorded the final grade. However, performance on the first paper will influence the final grade. In other words, if students have made a minimal effort on the first paper, expecting the professor to tidy it up for them, they will be penalized. Grades will reflect both form (i.e., use of the French language) and content (structure, ideas, argumentation etc.). *The final version must include my original comments and corrections*. (In other words, please do not erase them.)

Rewrites (i.e., final drafts) must be submitted within one week after corrections are received.

Why rewrites? This approach to writing assignments is intended to help students to find their errors and work on them, in order to ensure that grading takes on a more educative function. Why short papers? Doing frequent, short papers rather than one long paper is intended to help students to make a habit of activities, such as writing and submitting work steadily and frequently, that are a crucial part of college-level work.

We will be using MS Word, and the “track changes” and “comments” functions in particular. We will strive to use only digital copies via email. If this poses problems for you, please let me know. Response papers are to be no more than one page in length, double-spaced in Times New Roman 12pt. font. Please be sure to include your name, section number, the date, and the number of the response (i.e., “Response # 2”).

Please use the following format to name files: Assignment-title of project or paper-your last name. For example: Midterm paper – Two Conflicting Views of African Philosophy – González.doc

Please turn your spellchecker off in MSWord. If a Francophone friend has reread your text, please make this explicit. Finally, please keep in mind that work that seems “too perfect”—i.e., a product of spellcheck, of babelfish or of google translator—is easy to spot.

On sources: While internet-based texts and resources are in general acceptable, please use your judgment. Primary sources are preferable to secondary ones (i.e., sites citing other sites or texts). Wikipedia, personal web pages (unless the person in question has recognized authority in their field), web pages that do not cite their sources etc. should not be used. On the other hand, you are encouraged to use academic articles, online books, government or NGO web sites, etc. If you are unsure as to whether your source is acceptable please contact me before using it.

Five sources are required for the final paper but are optional for the compositions.

Honor Code :

Georgia Tech’s Academic Honor Code is to be respected. Should you have any questions, please see me and/or consult: [www.honor.gatech.edu](http://www.honor.gatech.edu).

*Help is available*

If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please consult me. I will do my best to help you address the concerns you have, and I may be able to direct you to other resources in the department or school.

Georgia Tech offers accommodation to students with disabilities: please see [www.adapts.ga.edu](http://www.adapts.ga.edu). If you have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know in the first week of the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. Please also contact the ADAPTS office for classroom and academic accommodations. If you need an accommodation, please contact Tameeka Hunter, Disabilities Services Specialist and Program Coordinator, at: tameeka.hunter@vpss.gatech.edu or (404) 894–256.

**Oral Presentations:**

Please see the sign-up sheet for more guidelines for oral presentations.

These presentations should include a talk, images, and questions to spur discussion. They are to last **20 minutes**, and should be accompanied by a bibliography consisting of at least 3 resources. The text/notes of the talk, the images, and the bibliography should be submitted via email before class. Citations should be done in MLA format OR the format used in your discipline. Presentations are to be chosen from a list of topics coordinated with our readings but students may suggest presentation topics as well.

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| SEMAINE | DATE | ACTIVITES |
| 1 | Tues: Aug 23 | **Introduction & Syllabus Review** |
|  | Thurs: Aug 25 | Camara Laye, *L’enfant noir* |
| 2 | Tues: Aug 30 | *“* |
|  | Thurs: Sept 1 | *“* |
| 3 | Tues: Sept 6 | *“* |
|  | Thurs: Sept 8 | *“* |
| 4 | Tues: Sept 13 | Christopher Miller, “Theories of Africans: The question of Literary Anthropology” |
|  | Thurs: Sept 15 | *“*  **Composition # 1 due** |
| 5 | Tues: Sept 20 | Mongo Beti, *Le pauvre Christ de Bomba* |
|  | Thurs: Sept 22 | *“* |
| 6 | Tues: Sept 27 | *“* |
|  | Thurs: Sept 29 | “ |
| 7 | Tues: Oct 4 | “ |
|  | Thurs: Oct 6 | “ |
| 8 | Tues: Oct 11 | 178-238 |
|  | Thurs: Oct 13 | **Midterm paper due**  Annaud, “Noirs et Blancs en couleur” |
| 9 | Tues: Oct 18 | Fall 2011 Student Recess-NO CLASS |
|  | Thurs: Oct 20 | Terminer *Le pauvre Christ de Bomba*  +Présentation |
| 10 | Tues: Oct 25 | Sander Gilman, “Black Bodies, White Bodies: Toward an Iconography of Female  Sexuality in Late Nineteenth Century Art, Medicine, and Literature.” |
|  | Thurs: Oct 27 | Ken Bugul, *Le baobab fou* |

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| 11 | Tues: Nov 1 | *“* |
|  | Thurs: Nov 3 | *“* |
| 12 | Tues: Nov 8 | *“* |
|  | Thurs: Nov 10 | Ousmane Sembène, *La noire de* [film on reserve at library and available streaming on Netflix].  **Composition # 2 due** |
| 13 | Tues: Nov 15 | Gayatri C. Spivak: “Can the Subaltern Speak?” |
|  | Thurs: Nov 17 | Christopher Miller, “African Literature and the Challenge of Intercultural Literacy” |
| 14 | Tues: Nov 22 | “ |
|  | Thurs: Nov 24 | Official School Holiday |
| 15 | Tues: Nov 29 | Ngugi wa Thiong’o, *Decolonising the Mind* (excerpts) |
|  | Thurs: Dec 1 | “ |
| 16 | Tues: Dec 6 | “ |
| Thurs: Dec 8 | Workshopping final research papers |
| 17 | Tues: Dec 13 | **Final paper due** |
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Dec. 19: Deadline - All grades must be entered on-line by Noon ET.

Dec. 20: Grades available online for students after 6:00pm ET.

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| **ML PERFORMANCE GOAL #1: PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION** | |
| **ML Learning Outcome 1 : Demonstrate oral and aural proficiency in the target language** | Students will demonstrate oral proficiency at the advanced high or superior level on the ACTFL scale. |
| **ML Learning Outcome 2:** Demonstrate effective presentation skills in the target language | Students will demonstrate the ability to present in class for 10-15 minutes without notes on an everyday topic. |
| **ML Learning Outcome 3: Demonstrate writing proficiency in the target language** | Students will produce compositions and long papers at the Intermediate High level on the ACTFL scale. |
| **ML Learning Outcome 4:**  Demonstrate proficiency in comprehension of authentic written texts in the target Language | Students will demonstrate analysis and critique of authentic texts related to familiar topics. |
| **ML PERFORMANCE GOAL #2: INTERCULTURAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE** | |
| **ML Learning Outcome 5: Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of a *specific* target-language country or region** | Students will successfully analyze the literature and cinema of French-speaking Africa. |
| **ML Learning Outcome 6:**  Demonstrate the ability to analyze an issue from target-culture perspective(s) | Students will display the ability to analyze issues of race, gender, ethnicity, immigration and religion from the perspectives of writers from the target cultures. |
| **ML Learning Outcome 7:**  Demonstrate critical reflection on cultural complexity and context | Students will analyze how their own background and experiences influence reading and comprehension of cultural products from the target cultures. |