

SST 4502: AFRICAN ORAL LITERATURE (SECTION 002G) - SPRING 2013

Professor: Tunde Akinyemi
Office Location: 348 Pugh Hall
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Period: MWF 9:35-10:25 - period 3
Venue: MAT 107
Credit: 3
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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course provides an overview of African oral literature, introduces some methodological and theoretical problems, and examines the socio-political and cultural relevance of the literature. It stresses the importance of the spoken word in Africa, the nature of African unwritten literature, the training of African oral artistes, and the place of the artistes in the society. It examines the problems raised by transcription and translation of African oral literature, and suggests some possible solutions to these problems. The course also discusses the socio-political and cultural relevance of specific genres of the literature such as the folktales, riddles, proverbs, praise poetry/panegyric, elegiac poetry, children's game songs and lullabies, religious songs and poetry, topical and political songs, oratory and formal speaking, etc. It concludes with an assessment of the changing role of oral literature in contemporary Africa.

REQUIRED TEXTS: *One* of the following 2 books is required for this course:

Bayo Ogunjimi & Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah *Introduction to African Oral Literature and Performance* Trenton: Africa World Press, 2005.

OR

Isidore Okpewho *African Oral Literature: Background, Character, and Continuity*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992.

SUPPLEMENTARY READING: In addition, the following works are relevant to the course and students are expected to be familiar with them during the semester:

Russell H. Kaschula Ed. *African Oral Literature: Functions in Contemporary Contexts*. Claremont: New Africa Books, 1998.

Ruth Finnegan *Oral Literature in Africa* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970.

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND EXPECTATIONS

You are encouraged to attend classes regularly and participate actively in class discussion. You can only do this if you complete all assigned readings before class. You are, however, allowed 2 unexcused absences. Beyond that, each additional absence will require a written excuse verifying illness or family emergency in accordance with UF policy, failing which, your final grade will be lowered by a one letter grade. Assignments are to be handed in by the designated date. Late assignments will be assessed a penalty of one-half letter grade out of fairness to those who hand in their work on time. Mark test dates on your calendars now so that you can plan ahead.

COURSE EVALUATION

Your final grade in this course will be distributed as follows:

<i>Class attendance and participation</i>	10%
<i>Tests and homework assignments</i>	45%
<i>Mid semester Exam</i>	20%
<i>Oral presentation</i>	15%
<i>Final Exam</i>	10%
Total:	100%

Oral Presentation: During Weeks 12, 13, & 14, each student will make oral presentation of an in-depth study on the status of oral literature in a chosen African society. Each student will have 40 minutes for presentation, while the last 10 minutes of class will be devoted to questions and discussion by all. PowerPoint presentation is allowed but not mandatory. **Presentation schedule will be available after Add/Drop deadline of 1/13**

GRADE CORRESPONDENCE

93-100 =A	90-92 =A-	
87-89 =B+	83-86 =B	80-82 =B-
77-79 =C+	73-76 =C	70-72 =C-
67-69 =D+	63-66 =D	60-62 =D-
Below 60 =E		

General

Feel free to ask question in the class so that you will not be left behind. However, if there are issues that we cannot resolve in class, you are encouraged to use my office hours or send me an email. I look forward to a rewarding semester with you all.

WEEKLY BREAKDOWN OF COURSE

Week I

Days	Topic	Reading
M: 1/7	Course introduction, an overview of the continent of Africa	Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul-Rasheed Na’Allah’s <i>Introduction to African Oral Literature</i> “Introduction”
W: 1/9 F: 1/11	The nature of African unwritten literature	Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul-Rasheed Na’Allah’s <i>Introduction to African Oral Literature</i> “chapter 9”

Week II

Days	Topic	Reading
M: 1/14	Classification of African Literature	Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul-Rasheed Na’Allah’s <i>Introduction to African Oral Literature</i> “The sources and origins of African oral performance”
W: 1/16	African oral artistes	Same as above
F: 1/18	African oral artistes and their work in the society	Same as above

Week III

Days	Topic	Reading
M: 1/21	<i>No class: LJK Holiday</i>	
W: 1/23	Collection, transcription and translation of African oral literature: Problems and prospects.	Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah's <i>Introduction to African Oral Literature</i> "Fieldwork practice and research methodology in oral literature and performance"
F: 1/25	Problems of translating African oral literature into English	Same as above
Notice:	<i>Test 1: on map of Africa on Friday 1/25 (20%)</i>	

Week IV

Days	Topic	Reading
M: 1/28	Folktales and narratives: myths	Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah's <i>Introduction to African Oral Literature</i> "chapters 4"
W: 2/30	Legends	Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah's <i>Introduction to African Oral Literature</i> "chapter 5"
F: 2/1	Folktales	Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah's <i>Introduction to African Oral Literature</i> "chapter 6"

Week V

Days	Topic	Reading
M: 2/4	Proverbs: functions	Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah's <i>Introduction to African Oral Literature</i> "chapter 7"
W: 2/6	Analysis of samples	Same as above
F: 2/8	Test 2: On Folk narratives and proverbs (20%)	

Week VI

Days	Topic	Reading
M: 2/11	Riddles	Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah's <i>Introduction to African Oral Literature</i> "chapter 8"
W: 2/13	Same as above	Same as above
F: 2/15	Analysis of samples	Same as above
Notice:	<i>Bring a list of 20 riddles + solution to class on 2/15 (5%)</i>	

Week VII

Days	Topic	Reading
M: 2/18	African religious belief systems	Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah's <i>Introduction to African Oral Literature</i> "chapter 10"
W: 2/20	Religious poetry	Same as above
F: 2/22	Analysis of samples	

Week VIII

Days	Topic	Reading
M: 2/25	Political system	Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah's <i>Introduction to African Oral Literature</i> "chapter 12"
W: 2/27	Salutation or praise poetry: categories and functions	Same as above
F: 3/1	<i>Mid-semester test (20%)</i>	

WEEK IX: 3/4-3/8 SPRING BREAK

Week X

Days	Topic	Reading
M: 3/11	Death and funeral in Africa	Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah's <i>Introduction to African Oral Literature</i> "chapter 13"
W: 3/13	Funeral Dirge: functions, stylistics, and nature of performance	Same as above

F: 3/15	Analysis of samples	Same as above
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Week XI

Days	Topic	Reading
M: 3/18	Occupational poetry	Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah's <i>Introduction to African Oral Literature</i> "chapter 14a"
W: 3/20	Heroic poetry	Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah's <i>Introduction to African Oral Literature</i> "chapter 14b"
F: 3/22	Topical poetry: categories	Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah's <i>Introduction to African Oral Literature</i> "chapter 15a"

Week XII

Days	Topic	Reading
M: 3/25	Oral presentation	
W: 3/27	Oral presentation	
F: 3/29	Oral presentation	

Week XIII

Days	Topic	Reading
M: 4/1	Oral presentation	
W: 4/3	Oral presentation	
F: 4/5	Oral presentation	

Week XIV

Days	Topic	Reading
M: 4/8	Oral presentation	
W: 4/10	Oral presentation	
F: 11/12	Oral presentation	

Week XV

Days	Topic	Reading
M: 4/15	Aesthetic transfer and preservation of African oral traditions in contemporary literature and film	
W: 4/17	Analysis of samples	
F: 4/19	Analysis of samples	

Week XVI

Days	Topic	Reading
M: 4/21	Orality and globalization slavery, identity and the survival of African oral literature in the Diaspora	Russell H. Kaschula (Ed.) <i>African Oral Literature: Functions in Contemporary Contexts</i> "Introduction"
W: 4/24	Final Exam	