

ALT 202: A Survey of African Literature

Unit Description

The survey unit will critically examine and explore selected African literary texts written in English. The general focus will be on three distinct but fairly related concepts: myth, history, and tradition in so far as they function as principal signposts for the approach to and appreciation of contemporary African literary expression. Specifically we will examine how selected works draw upon and/or re-invent myth as a perspective and as basis of dramatic conflict. We will also explore the extent to which African writing re-interprets history and draws on oral traditional modes. Eventually, we will be interested in critical evaluation of this body of writing as a unique phenomenon reflecting sensibility and consciousness.

Unit Objectives

- ❖ To introduce learners to the theoretical understanding of the concept of ‘African literature’
- ❖ To sensitize students about the phenomenon of African consciousness in as far as it relates to myth, history and tradition
- ❖ To enhance the learner’s ability to critique literary works competently

References

- ✓ Gikandi, Simon. *Reading the African Novel*
- ✓ Irele, Abiola. *The Cambridge Companion to the African Novel*
- ✓ Orisawayi, Dele. *Literature and Black Aesthetics*
- ✓ Soyinka, Wole. *Myth, Literature, and the African World*
- ✓ Wanjala, Chris. *Standpoints on African Literature” Critical Anthology*
- ✓ Wa Thiong’o, Ngugi. *Writers in Politics*