

Department of English, Carleton University

ENGL 5004W

Winter 2013

*** Preliminary Course Outline / Subject to Change

Studies in Transnational Literatures- Memory and Archive: African Self-Writing

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Course description:

This seminar offers an overview of the modes of self-writing through which Africa responded to the challenge of modernity and coloniality from the onset of the 20th century. Beyond fiction, African writers deployed genres such as the memoir, autobiography, creative non-fiction, and theoretical essays to explore a broad range of political and identity issues in the quest to map Africa's place and space in the world. By bringing this body of auto/biographical work into dialogue with postcolonial theoretical reflections on such issues as trauma, H(h)istory, identity, and subjectivity, the seminar will examine the tensions between memory and the archive and how such tensions continue to make pertinent the afterlives of colonialism. Our readings will come from writers such as Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Manthia Diawara, Nawal El Saadawi, Achille Mbembe, Edward Said, Frantz Fanon, and Ato Quayson.