



Langues et Littératures

Revue du Groupe d'Etudes Linguistiques et Littéraires

GELL

N° **17**

Janvier 2013

Maquette: M. BA

UNIVERSITE GASTON BERGER DE SAINT-LOUIS

B.P. 234, SAINT-LOUIS, SENEGAL

ISSN 0850-5543

LANGUES ET LITTERATURES

Revue du Groupe d'Etudes Linguistiques et Littéraires (G.E.L.L.)

B.P. 234 Saint-Louis (Sénégal) – Tél. (221) 961 22 87 – Fax 961 18 84
Courriers électroniques: boucamara2000@gmail.com ou naedioba@yahoo.fr

Compte Chèque Postal n°09553-A Saint-Louis, Sénégal
Directeur du G.E.L.L. : Pr Boubacar CAMARA

COMITE SCIENTIFIQUE ET DE LECTURE

Begong Bodoli	BETINA (UGB, Sénégal)	Locha	MATESO (France)
Boubacar	CAMARA (UGB, Sénégal)	Maweja	MBAYA (UGB, Sénégal)
Mamadou	CAMARA (UGB, Sénégal)	G. Ossito	MIDIOHOUAN (Bénin)
Mosé	CHIMOUN (UGB, Sénégal)	Pius Ngandu	NKASHAMA (USA)
Moussa	DAFF (UCAD, Sénégal)	Fallou	NGOM (USA)
Alioune	DIANE (UCAD, Sénégal)	Albert	OUEDRAOGO (B.Faso)
Cheikh	DIENG (UCAD, Sénégal)	Sékou	SAGNA (UGB, Sénégal)
Samba	DIENG (UCAD, Sénégal)	Oumar	SANKHARE (Sénégal)
Dieudonné	KADIMA-NZUJI (Congo)	Ndiawar	SARR (UGB, Sénégal)
Mamadou	KANDJI (UCAD, Sénégal)	Aliko	SONGOLO (USA)
Baydallaye	KANE (UGB, Sénégal)	Omar	SOUGOU (UGB, Sénégal)

COMITE DE RÉDACTION

Administrateur	Badara	SALL
Rédacteur en Chef	Mamadou	BA
Directeur de publication	Birahim	DIAKHOUMPA
Secrétaire de rédaction	Lamarana	DIALLO
Trésorier	Banda	FALL

Copyright : GELL, Université Gaston Berger de Saint-Louis, 2013

ISSN 0850-5543

SOMMAIRE

Babacar DIENG	
On the Debate over the Evaluation of African-American Literature.....	5
Babou DIENE	
<i>Trois femmes puissantes</i> et l'énigme identitaire de Marie Ndiaye.....	17
Cheikh NDIAYE	
Apposition ou tournure emphatique?	31
Robert YENNAH	
La prévoyance dans la littérature des Lumières: Prévost, Voltaire, Laclos et Rousseau	49
Djidiack FAYE	
Sueño Y Amor En <i>Aventurarse Perdiendo</i> De María De Zayas Y Sotomayor	61
Ibrahima SARR	
Les noms qui parlent : étude de la perception du réel à travers les systèmes traditionnels de nomination dans les sociétés sénégalaises	75
Cheikhou DIOUF	
Ribâ (usure) et intérêt bancaire en Islam	89
Aly SAMBOU	
Functional Approach to Applied Language Teaching	103
Ousmane NGOM	
Métaphores obsédantes du <i>seetu</i> et reflets identitaires dans <i>Doomi Golo</i> et <i>L'Afrique au-delà du miroir</i> de Boubacar Boris Diop	121
Bégon-Bodoli BETINA	
De la francophonie à la « francophonie » : un défi de la francophonie du XXIème siècle	137
Moctar GAYE	
Le « comprendre » herméneutique entre réception et interprétation.....	151
Adolphe SARR	
Deux facettes de l'amour dans <i>Le Rouge et le Noir</i> de Stendhal : l'amour-passion et l'amour-combat.....	181
Bertin C. YEHOUEYOU	
Sémiologie de la reformulation : analyse et typologie des lapsus linguae en anglais et en français	195
Gustave Voltaire DIOUSSE	
Quand le rapport langue et identité s'invite dans la politique : où est l'altérité ? .	205

On the Debate over the Evaluation of African-American Literature

Babacar DIENG*

Abstract

This article scrutinizes some key debates in African-American literary criticism; more specifically, it explores whether “Black Art” can be said to exist and if African-American texts should be analyzed using universal parameters or criteria taking into account the theoretical and cultural accounts of black writers. It argues that even though African-American texts should be subjected to conventionally accepted and universal natural symbols of artistic accomplishment, critics should not ignore the self-conscious aesthetic dimension in the works of African-American artists to avoid perpetuating a cultural imperialism by ignoring the cultural specificities of these texts. Indeed, a distinctive African-American tradition seems to have resisted the test of cultural hybridity, social and political integration.

Résumé

Cet article traite de deux importants débats qui ont jalonné l'évolution de la littérature africaine américaine : d'abord la question à savoir si un art d'essence noir — Black Art — existe ou non ; ensuite la question de l'évaluation des productions littéraires des afro-américains, à savoir si celles-ci doivent uniquement être soumises à des critères universels d'évaluation ou bien en même temps à des paramètres prenant aussi en considération la culture des auteurs et l'esthétique qu'ils essaient de mettre en œuvre. Se fondant sur l'évolution de la littérature au plan universel, l'auteur essaye de démontrer que même si les productions littéraires afro-américaines doivent être évaluées suivant des critères conventionnellement acceptés et des « symboles naturels » de réussite artistique, les critiques littéraires doivent éviter de faire montre d'impérialisme culturel en ignorant l'esthétique qui sous-tend la littérature afro-américaine, car une tradition littéraire noire puisant son inspiration dans la culture noire existe depuis les années vingt et semble avoir résisté aux chocs de l'hybridité et de l'intégration politique et sociale.

Introduction

Since its earliest literary productions, African-American literature is said to have suffered not only from harsh criticism resulting from subjective factors and the critics' failure to grasp its full significance, but also its progress has been strewn with resistance. Whereas Voltaire, who was living in England at the time when Phillis Wheatley —the first African American to publish a book in the colonies on any subject— released her *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and*

* Section d'Anglais, Université Gaston Berger de Saint-Louis, Sénégal.

Moral, wrote in a letter to a friend in 1774 that she was the composer of very good English verse, Thomas Jefferson had “declared that her verse was beneath the dignity of criticism” (Hart 712). Later, George Schuyler implicitly negated the specificity of African-American literature when he refuted the possibility of development of Negro art in America (Ervin 24). Still in the same vein, the label “protest literature” dismissed the literary value of an important number of works by African-American writers. Finally, some white critics argue that “there is no black aesthetics, for there is no white aesthetics” (Gayle 92).

Even though African-American literature has gained considerable recognition today, some of these issues have not lost their topicality. The issue of the development of black art remains very important, especially in a context of political and social integration, and multiculturalism. Indeed, it would be interesting, in line with Schuyler’s argument, to analyze whether black art has developed or been able to survive the test of integration and cultural hybridity. Another issue of relevance is whether critics, as Charles S. Johnson argued in the 1920s, should subject African-American texts to the “same measurements applied to artistic accomplishment” (Wintz 173) or use special criteria promulgated in Black aesthetics and advocated by writers to evaluate African-American texts. Finally, it would also be interesting to explore whether or not there are fixed universal standards applicable in the measurements of artistic achievement of all literatures, regardless of geographical and cultural locations.

These are issues that this article will attempt to explore by arguing that what is termed “black aesthetics” cannot be ignored in the assessment of works by black writers. The black aesthetics has not only laid the foundations of a distinctive African-American literary tradition that continues to exist through the works of contemporary black artists, despite the process of cultural hybridity, social and political integration, black artists perpetuate a black aesthetics tradition. Therefore, African-American texts should be subjected to conventionally accepted and universal natural symbols of artistic accomplishment transcending race, ethnicity and geographic origins; however, critics should not ignore the self-conscious aesthetic dimension in these works, and they must avoid perpetuating a cultural imperialism through proscription and ignorance of the cultural specificities of these texts.

Since the Harlem Renaissance, African-American aesthetic theorists have been engaged in the task of formulating a black aesthetics not only answering the needs and aspirations of black people, but also drawing heavily from their cultural heritage in their endeavors to reach beauty. Although some of these theorists may have been guilty of essentializing their culture, and despite the differences of views among them, there seems to be a pattern stipulating that black art should not only be beautiful, but also it should be enlightening for the black community and make

Evaluation of African-American Literature (Babacar DIENG)

use of African-American culture. Black art therefore affirms black culture and supports and guides the African-American community in its process of self-definition and its quest for freedom. W. E. B Dubois's "Criteria of Negro Art" (1926) constitutes one of the earliest pronouncements of black aesthetics and the role of the black writer. According to Dubois, Beauty cannot be separated from Truth and Right, and "all art is propaganda and ever must be," and it is the responsibility of the black artist to help his people "gain the right to enjoy and love" (22). Later on, in the context of the Harlem Renaissance, African-American artists such as Langston Hughes, in "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," advocated the development of a functional art informed by a great presence of Afro-American culture as a form of artistic expression. The Harlem Renaissance initiated the development of a self-conscious form of Negro art inspired by the Jazz, the Blues, and the Negro spirituals, among other forms of affirmation of African-American cultural heritage.

The Black Arts Movements of the 1960s further consolidated this development of Negro Art in America. In line with Dubois and Hughes, the Black Arts Movements offered a general framework representing the main components of black aesthetics. As Baraka explains,

Black Arts is the aesthetic and spiritual sister of the Black power concept. As such, it envisions an art that speaks directly to the needs and aspirations of Black America. In order to perform this task, the Black Arts Movement proposes a radical reordering of western cultural aesthetics. It proposes a separate symbolism, mythology, critique and iconology (Quoted in Baker 184).

Baraka's words not only posit the functionality and ideological positioning of black aesthetics, but also it reveals a postcolonial desire to devise a new table of rules that would support the affirmation of African-American culture.

Following Addison Gayle's analysis, black aesthetics constitutes the formulation of new "proscriptive symbols" of achieving beauty. Gayle distinguishes two sets of symbols for achieving beauty: on the one hand, there are natural symbols corresponding to "absolute beauty as created by God," and on the other hand, there are proscriptive symbols; that is, "symbols of beauty as prescribed by man, which is to say that certain symbols are said to mean such and such by man himself" (95). Black aesthetics does not question the validity of natural symbols; its aesthetic principles rather contest the western proscriptive symbols that participate in the "cultural strangulation" of black artists. Proscriptive symbols have never been universally accepted, for they vary according to the context and critics and scholars take this parameter in consideration while measuring the quality of artistic productions. For example, despite the aesthetic divergences of nineteenth century British artists, Anne K. Mellor proposes that "practicing critics relied on these differing aesthetic positions as the basis for their

judgement of individual works” (128). Like the artists and theorists of black aesthetics, the Neoclassicists, Edmund Burke, William Gilpin, Adam Smith, and the Romantics devised a new set of proscriptive symbols. These different proscriptive symbols account for the diversity and richness of nineteenth century Britain. The mimetic and conservative Neoclassical aesthetic theory dominated from late 18th century to late 19th century before it was strongly contested by Edmund Burke and William Gilpin’s theory of the sublime. Later on, Adam Smith initiated an aesthetic theory that will develop into the Cult of Sensibility. Then

William Blake, William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Hazlitt, John Keats, and Percy Shelley among others developed alternative aesthetic theories grouped under the name Romanticism (Mellor 126).

Not only did these schools of thoughts abide by different aesthetic theories, but also they assigned new roles to the artists. The Romantics—whose art was characterized by a vehement protest and a rejection of sociopolitical institutions, for example, believed that art should not only educate, but also it should save mankind. However, critics did not label their work protest literature; the 19th century protest novel is termed “novel of purpose” or “roman à these.” Furthermore, scholars and students of British literature immerse themselves substantially into the culture and the materials before they write about British writers because scholarship dictates that “the search for structural relationship in any literal text, ..., entails a knowledge of the full cultural discourse that provides a context” (Baker 196). In her essay, “Miss-Trained or Untrained? Jackleg Critics and African-American literature.....” (1995), Trudier Harris argues that an objective, honest and honorable evaluation of works by African-American writers requires an immersion into their culture and materials. Harris considers that regardless of their race, scholars who want to study African-American literature must train themselves and acquire the tools necessary to explore the field (462). Trudier Harris’s arguments suggest also that critics continue to ignore black aesthetics in the study of black writers too and Toni Morrison complains about it in one of her interviews.

The debate over black aesthetics continues to be topical in the twenty-first century because it seems as if a black aesthetic tradition continues to exist and critics do not take this into consideration when they explore works of contemporary black writers who perpetuate this tradition. Although Schuyler’s pessimism about the development of Negro art in America is partly justified, a survey of contemporary black writers’ productions and of the positions they adopt vis-à-vis black aesthetics illustrate that a black aesthetic tradition is being perpetuated. Schuyler was prophetic in anticipating that cultural hybridity resulting from

Evaluation of African-American Literature (Babacar DIENG)

integration would impact the development of black art and modern theorists such as Edward Said corroborate his analysis.

In *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward W. Said considers that, “besides making observations about art that preserve its unique endowments and at the same time map its affiliations,” it is important to “set the art in the global, earthly context” to better grasp its complexities (7). In Said’s view, the global context helps grasp the intricacies of art because art is a cultural form, and “cultures are humanly made structures of both authority and participation, benevolent in what they include, incorporate, and validate, less benevolent in what they exclude and demote” (15). To corroborate his view, Said describes how the rebellious natives constructed their pre-colonial past to create valorizing images of their culture and to fight against the disruptions of colonialism. A similar construction --a construction buttressed by ideological and political motives-- can be observed in America with the development of black art. African-American art has the unique specificity of growing in the heart of the metropolitan center, which makes its study far more complex than the study of other postcolonial arts such as African and Caribbean arts. Being located in the center of the metropolis, African-American art will, therefore, be characterized by an ambivalence that can be explained by Dubois’ theory of double-consciousness.

Furthermore, African- American culture will suffer more from the phenomenon of hybridity. As Said theorizes, far from being “unitary and monolithic or autonomous” entities, cultures are hybrid, and they assume more foreign elements, alterities, differences as they consciously exclude” (15). In view of the hybrid nature of cultures and the centrality of culture in black art, George Schuyler’s argument about the impossibility of development of a Negro art in America seems justified. Furthermore, by establishing a relation between art and the context Said’s approach enables us to see that politics influence greatly art.

The progressive social and political integration of African Americans contributed in eroding the artists’ political engagement. The creation of a black aesthetics obeyed an attempt on the part of African Americans to devise a new frame of reference that would take their existence and concerns into consideration. These concerns are apparent in the ideology of the Black Arts Movement and Gayle’s denunciation of the “cultural strangulation” that blacks suffer from in American society. Larry Neal, defining the Black Aesthetics, states that it is broader than an African-American cultural tradition, for it,

encompasses all useable elements of Third World culture. The motive behind the Black Aesthetic is the destruction of the white thing, the destruction of white ideas, and white ways of looking at the world (Ervin 124)

Larry Neal’s words reveal the political, ideological, and cultural motivations of the Black Aesthetics. On the one hand, there was a desire to resist

the hegemony of the dominant culture, and on the other, there was a vibrant need to create a new set of rules for not only evaluating black art, but also ensuring that African-American culture is valorized in African-American artistic productions. In her essay entitled “Cultural Strangulation. Black Literature and the White Aesthetics,” Addison Gayle Jr. also posits the postcolonial impulse that supported the development of a black aesthetics in America, an aesthetics that would devise a new set of proscriptive symbols of beauty in a context of cultural strangulation of the works of black people and an inappropriateness of the symbols set up by the dominant culture.

As the growth of black aesthetics was buttressed by the context of oppression and marginalization of the African Americans, the improvement of their social and political status gradually eroded the ideological foundations and political radicalism of black art.

As Houston Baker Jr. explains, in “Generational Shifts and the Recent Criticism of Afro-American Literature,” “the dominant critical perspective on African-American literature during the late 1950s and early 1960s might be called the poetics of integrationism” (180). For Baker, Wright epitomizes this new ideological orientation influenced by the impending wave of integration marked by the proclamation of the death of segregation. After the Supreme Court’s decision in *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954) in which the Court ruled the unconstitutionality of the doctrine “separate but equal,” the ideological orientation advocated by Richard Wright was to consider African-American literature as a segment of American Literature. In Wright’s perspective, the ruling of the Supreme Court would guarantee a future equality between the races and a common experience. In turn, “this equality of social experience will translate in the literary domain as a homogeneity of represented experience” (180). Other radical voices of the Harlem Renaissance such as Langston Hughes--especially in his declarations in “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain”-- shared this new euphoria of the post-1954 era. In his address to the First Conference of Negro Writers (1959), Langston Hughes advises the younger writer

to be...writer first, colored second. That means losing nothing of your racial identity.... In the great sense of the word...good art transcends land, race, or nationality, and color drops away. If you are a good writer, in the end neither blackness nor whiteness makes a difference to the readers (Quoted in Fabi 124).

Even if Hughes closes his address with the sarcastic remark that a white writer has more opportunities to be successful, the integrationist stance is apparent in his words.

Evaluation of African-American Literature (Babacar DIENG)

However, even if this integrationist wave lasted a while, the disillusionment of the 1960s gave rise to the Militant Black Arts Movement and the consolidation of Black Aesthetics. As a matter of fact, the integrationist poetics were followed by a period of intense nationalism and Baker notes it well in “Generational Shifts and the Recent Criticism of Afro-American Literature.” The 1960s played a determinant role in supporting the development of black art. The deconstructionists-- Baraka, Larry Neal, Henderson and Addison Gayle-- not only advocated a political engagement of the black writers, but they were also interested in establishing a theoretical framework for the future of black art. Furthermore, the Black Arts Movements’ reversal of western mythology contributed largely to the valorization of African-American culture through its central use in art. African and African-American heritage became aesthetic and political tools. For example, African oral tradition, African world-views, black music, and black language became central components of works by African-American writers. Furthermore, as Carolyn F. Gerald notes in “The Black Writer and His Role,” the Black Arts Movement has been instrumental in changing the role of the black writer as image-maker. Though the exploitation of the past and the reversal of western mythology and symbolism, the black writer “destroys the zero and the negative image-myths” of the black community by “turning them inside out” (85).

Even though its nationalism and political radicalism are appreciated differently nowadays, the Black Arts Movement not only established black aesthetic theories, but it also greatly influenced the definition of the black writer’s role and responsibility. The black artist is not only responsible for creating positive images of the black community, but also is supposed to raise issues and point the way. Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man* epitomizes this new role and responsibility of the artist; the black artist is no longer “writing back to the dominant culture” as Baldwin denounces in “Everybody’s Protest Novel,” but rather he engages in a constructive dialogue with the community. Although the political radicalism of the 1960s will progressively disappear with integration and cultural hybridity, black writers of the post-1960s era focus on their community as a result of the impact of Black Arts Movement.

The post-reconstructionist years gave birth to a literature focusing on the challenges the African Americans faced in their daily lives. For example, issues of identity, self, adjustment to the urban environment, family, and children become more and more central in literary representations by black writers. Unlike Richard Wright and Ann Petry who used fiction as a form of social criticism and propaganda, Ralph Ellison and James Baldwin envisioned a fiction that should guide, enlighten, and make the “world a more human dwelling place” (Ervin 111). Furthermore, the works of the black women writers of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s—Toni Cade Bambara, Zora Neale Hurston, Toni Morrison, etc.-- illustrate a growing trend towards a central use of African-American culture in their literary craft. These specific characteristics – characteristics inherited from the 1960s-- of

their literary works contributed to the growing popularity of African-American culture and art and to the fame of black artists. African-American writers continue to be influenced by the aesthetic and ideological principles elaborated by their ancestors. Going from T. S. Elliot's definition of tradition, one can assume that a black aesthetic tradition continues to exist in the twentieth and twenty first century, for most black artists still possess "a historical sense," that is their artistic productions incorporate features pertaining to Black Art. As Elliot theorizes a tradition exists as long as a writer produces literary works with a historical sense, that is, when the writer does not simply write "with his own generation in his bones," but with a feeling that a specific form of literature forms part and exists simultaneously with his experience (Quoted in Said 4).

As famous contemporary artists such as August Wilson and Toni Morrison, despite their popularity, perpetuate some of the most significant characteristic features of the Black Arts—its functionality and its use of Afro-American culture, one can assume that a black aesthetic tradition continues to exist. For example, in "The Ground on Which I Stand," August Wilson explains that, for him, race matters because it is the most significant entity of somebody's personality. August Wilson asserts that he is heavily influenced by the activism of the 1960s because he grew up in the years of glory of the Black Power Movement. Consequently, August Wilson remains very committed to the advancement of black people and the affirmation and preservation of his cultural heritage. August Wilson envisions his art as a continuation of the slave quarters' art --an art not designed to entertain white society, but rather an art that "feeds the spirit and celebrates the life of black America by designing its strategies for survival and prosperity" (3). Although August Wilson does not deny the influence of Greek and American dramatists, he considers himself as part of the self-defined tradition initiated by the precursors of the Black Arts Movement towards whom he is very grateful. Wilson's position is clearly stated in his words when he thinks that "the brilliant explosion of black arts and letters of the 1960s remains, for me, the hallmark and the signpost that points the way to our contemporary work on the same ground" (3). August Wilson shares many similarities with Toni Morrison as far as their views on the function of art and their desires to promote their culture through art are concerned.

Despite the fact that she has been adopted by mainstream American society, Toni Morrison forms part of the black aesthetics tradition that grew up during the Harlem Renaissance and was consolidated in the 1960s. In Morrison's view, the novel has always served the political interests of the class that wrote it, and her writing aims at performing the same role for the black community, especially in a context where the black community has lost the therapeutic support of music and storytelling. In this context, Morrison considers that "another form has to take that place, and it seems to [her] that the novel is needed by African

Evaluation of African-American Literature (Babacar DIENG)

Americans now in a way that it was not needed before” (199). Like August Wilson, Morrison does not consider that art should merely entertain. For Morrison, art should be beautiful, but it should also work, that is, it should raise issues and help the community find answers to them. Morrison also forms part of a black aesthetic tradition because she attempts to instill in her work specific African-American cultural elements such as the techniques of storytelling and the power of the sermonic tradition. For example, she struggles to make her words gain the oral fluidity of the storyteller’s language and tries to draw the audience into the telling of the story by call/response strategies similar to the preacher’s sermon. These characteristics of Black art can be perceived in her most recent work, *Love*, a novel that illustrates her preoccupation to deal with issues confronting her community and to make use of the richness of her culture.

Whereas Morrison and Wilson’s illustrate an unquestionable perpetuation of a black aesthetic tradition, other black artists perpetuate it in a less visible manner. For example, other artists such as Cornelius Eady illustrate an attempt to evolve in a third space that is, however, still rife with racial tensions and where black aesthetics continues to prosper. Cornelius Eady rejects the prescription that his art should focus on race; however, African-American culture informs his art. Cornelius Eady reserves his right to represent in his poems preoccupations different from race and color because he is “also an American, a New Yorker, a husband, a son, a jazz fan, a musician, a college professor, a friend” (454). Cornelius Eady’s words not only instantiate the product of the process of cultural hybridity, but his views also illustrate that the progressive integration of African-Americans into mainstream American life renders the definition of black artist more complex. However, even if the political and ideological commitment of black artists to their race differs, African American culture continues to form a significant part of their craft. In most of his poems, Eady celebrates the blues singer. Other artists such as Ishmael Reed perpetuate a black aesthetic tradition when they define themselves as folklorists and defamiliarize black aesthetics forms. Furthermore, rap music informs the works of many young black poets. One reason explaining this persistent presence of black culture in black artists’ productions can be the fact that African-American culture has gained much popularity in America to the point that it is constantly being appropriated by powerful business concerns.

Conclusion

Consequently, even if the political engagement associated with black art has been eroded in a context of melting pot where race literature may not be acceptable, the use of African-American culture in artistic productions initiated by the black aesthetics continues. Furthermore, the constant preoccupation with issues

concerning or threatening the black community constitutes a defamiliarization of the black aesthetic principle, for it illustrates a new form of political commitment.

Today more than ever, black aesthetics should count among the criteria used to assess the accomplishment of African-American writers. Not only would black aesthetics help understand the complexity of the impressive number of works that black writers have produced in the past, but also help better grasp the significance of contemporary literary works belonging to a black aesthetic tradition. George Schuyler's pessimism about the development of black art in America was however intellectually grounded, for cultural hybridity and integration have eroded black aesthetics and affected black art; nevertheless, the continuous impact of black aesthetic principles elaborated by theorists of the Black Arts Movement constitute strong argument opposing Schuyler's position. There is a black aesthetics, that coexists with several other aesthetics, and which supported the development of black art in America. Despite the perpetuation of a black aesthetic tradition, the issue of black aesthetics remains unresolved. Morrison protests in interviews that white critics often do not analyze her work within the context of the culture she writes from. August Wilson has to remind white critics that "to understand and evaluate the unique values of black art, they must do their homework and study the culture that gave it birth" (Ambush 582).

Today, in the context of a multicultural American society, the affirmation of cultural specificity is considered as a threat to political stability because any categorization built around race suggests power relations (Fabi 21). For example, Ambush considers that August Wilson's promotion of black art in his keynote address "The Ground on Which I Stand," provoked seismic reactions among some Whites even though African Americans warmly welcomed his affirmation of a culturally-rooted and enlightening black theater. Robert Burnstein—a white critic and one of the most ardent detractors of August Wilson—not only depicts him as an old-fashioned black man promoting separation of races, but also disagrees with Wilson about the function and purpose of art and the criteria by which art should be evaluated (580-1). That is to say, that some white critics still believe black art should be submitted to universal evaluation criteria without regards to its cultural uniqueness and Blacks should join an "assimilated American aesthetic melting pot". In so doing, they not only limit the intellectual field for the study of African-American literature, but they also perpetuate a form of cultural imperialism in a context where America is trying to unite around its differences. As new historicists explain it any claim of universality constitutes a form of imperialism.

Evaluation of African-American Literature (Babacar DIENG)

Works Cited

- AMBUSH, Benny Sato. "Culture Wars." *African American Review*. 31. 4 (Winter 1997): 579- 586.
- BAKER, Houston A Jr. "Generational Shifts and the Recent Criticism of Afro-American Literature." *African American Literary Theory*. Ed. Winston Napier. New York: New York UP, 2000.
- BALDWIN, James. "The Creative Process." *African American Literary Theory*. Ed. Winston Napier. New York: New York UP, 2000.
- FABI, Gullia M. *Passing and the Rise of the African American Novel*. Chicago: UP of Illinois, 2001.
- GAYLE, Addison Jr. "Cultural Strangulation. Black Literature and the White Aesthetic." *African American Literary Theory*. Ed. Winston Napier. New York: New York UP, 2000.
- GERALD, Carolyn F. "The Black Writer and His Role." *African American Literary Theory*. Ed. Winston Napier. New York: New York UP, 2000.
- HARRIS, Trudier. "Miss-Trained or Untrained? Jackleg Critics and African American Literature." Ed. Hazel Arnett Ervin. *African American Literary Criticism, 1773 to 2000*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1999.
- HART, James D., ed. *The Oxford Companion to American Literature*. Sixth Edition. New York: Oxford UP, 1995.
- MILLER, E. Ethelbert. "An Interview with Cornelius Eady" Ed. Hazel Arnett Ervin. *African American Literary Criticism, 1773 to 2000*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1999.
- MORRISON, Toni. "Rootedness: The Ancestor as Foundation". Ed. Hazel Arnett Ervin. *African American Literary Criticism, 1773 to 2000*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1999.
- NEAL, Larry. "The Black Arts Movement". Ed. Hazel Arnett Ervin. *African American Literary Criticism, 1773 to 2000*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1999.
- SAID, Edward W. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1993.
- WILSON, August. "The Ground on Which I Stand." *Callaloo* 20.3 (1998) 493-503.
- WINTZ, Carry, ed. *The Harlem Renaissance 1920-1940. The Politics and Aesthetics of "New Negro" Literature*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1996.

INSTRUCTIONS AUX AUTEURS

Langue de publication et nature des articles

Cette revue annuelle, organe du G.E.L.L., publie des articles traitant exclusivement des langues, du discours et de la littérature. Ils pourront être rédigés en français, anglais, allemand, arabe ou espagnol.

Soumission et mise en forme

Les articles ne doivent pas dépasser **20 pages**, soit **7000 mots** environ. Ils seront envoyés en fichier attaché par courrier électronique au Directeur de la Revue (boucamara2000@gmail.com) et au Rédacteur en Chef (naedioba@yahoo.fr).

La police utilisée est Times New Roman taille 12 et interligne 1,5.

La présentation bibliographique doit respecter les normes **ISBD** (International Standard Bibliographie Description), comme dans les exemples ci-après :

- BEAUD, Michel. *L'Art de la thèse* (en italiques). Paris : La Découverte, 1985.
- CHEVRIER, Jacques. «L'écrivain africain devant la langue française». in *L'Afrique littéraire et artistique*, n°50, 1978, pp.47-52.
- MOURALIS, Bernard. «Mongo Beti et la modernité» in Stephen H. ARNOLD (dir.). *Critical Perspectives on Mongo Beti*. Colorado Springs : Three Continents Press, 1998, pp.367-376.

NB : Les entrées doivent être classées par ordre alphabétique.

Les notes de bas de page auront une numérotation continue. Les appels de notes se feront par un chiffre en exposant et sans parenthèses.

Les titres d'ouvrages sont à mettre en *italique* et les caractères **gras** sont utilisés pour les titres des chapitres et sous-chapitres

Les citations sont mises en relief entre guillemets. Elles sont isolées (par indentation en augmentant les marges gauches et droites) lorsqu'elles sont supérieures ou égales à trois lignes.

Composition / identification de l'article

L'auteur mentionnera son **nom**, son **grade** et son **institution** d'appartenance au début de l'article juste après le titre.

Afin de faciliter la communication veuillez accompagner votre texte d'une page préliminaire où seront indiquées votre adresse postale, votre numéro téléphone et adresse e-mail.

Chaque auteur joindra à son article un **résumé** de 10 à 15 lignes (environ 900 à 1000 caractères), en français et en anglais suivi d'une liste de **mots-clés**. Cette rubrique sera insérée juste avant le début du texte proprement dit.

Dans la mesure du possible, **bien structurer le texte** par l'introduction de titres/sous-titres de partie (au maximum trois niveaux).

Nous rappelons qu'un article (qui doit traiter d'un sujet original ou analyser originalement un sujet) doit comprendre une introduction, un développement comprenant au moins deux sections et une conclusion. L'introduction justifie et situe le sujet, explicite la ou les méthode(s) et précise le plan qui sera suivi au cours du développement ; alors que le bilan sera effectué dans la conclusion. Une bibliographie succincte terminera l'article. Veillez à bien relire votre texte.

Tableaux et schémas

Si l'on doit introduire des **tableaux**, essayer de les faire tenir dans la justification (115 X 200 mm).

Les **schémas** seront placés dans des zones de dessin afin d'éviter leur dissociation.

Sommaire du n°16, janvier 2012

BULLETIN D'ABONNEMENT

(À remplir en caractère d'imprimerie)

Je soussigné(e)

Adresse

.....

.....

souscrit àabonnement(s) d'un an à *Langues et Littératures*

Mode de règlement :

Virement bancaire ou mandat postal a l'ordre de :

Groupe d'Etudes Linguistiques et Littéraires

Compte cheque postal n°09553-A Saint-Louis, Sénégal

Prix du numéro :

Afrique : 3000 F CFA (+ port)

France et Zone Euro : 40 €

USA : \$52

Canada : \$C55

Les auteurs des articles retenus sont priés de verser une contribution de 20.000 F CFA par mandat postal, établi au nom de Banda FALL.