

Les Noires de...

FREN 520 Studies in Diaspora, Transnationalism, and Globalization

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Course Description

Black women were pioneers in building "the colonial metropolis," even if, as Jennifer Boittin explains, "a definitive count of black colonial migrants during the interwar years is difficult to establish, in part because the numbers [...] often did not take into account Antilleans (who were French citizens)." Just as obtaining an empirical account of black women in France remains difficult and problematic, literary and filmic accounts and representations of black women in France have been historically marginalized even as



From *La Noire de...* by Ousmane Sembène.

they have steadily evolved. While in the interwar years characters such as Josephine Baker's Aouïna in the film *Princesse Tam Tam* (1935) or Elisa in Paulette Nardal's short story "En Exil" (1929) only pass through Paris before finding themselves literally and figuratively written out of the Hexagon and *back home*, in the second half of the twentieth century more black women and their protagonists make the trip to France to stay, or travel back and forth regularly between the Hexagon and the islands.

This course focuses on how women of color from the Antilles, and throughout the black Atlantic, navigate migration, transnationality, and spatial relegation given the legacy of French imperialism and the contemporary dynamics of globalization. The secondary critical readings will expand our frame of reference for broader and comparative perspectives on concepts in diaspora, transnationalism, and globalization.

Primary works will include Ousmane Sembène, *La noire de...* (1966), Simone and André Schwarz-Bart, *Un plat de porc aux bananes vertes* (1967), Françoise Ega, *Lettres à une noire* (1978), Suzanne Dracius, *L'Autre qui danse* (1989), Gisèle Pineau, *L'Exil selon Julia* (1996), Antoine Léonard Maestrati, *L'Avenir est ailleurs* (2007).

Secondary texts will include articles and essays by Maryse Condé, Edwidge Danticat, Jamaica Kincaid, Audre Lorde, M. Jacqui Alexander, Sadiya Hartman, Françoise Lionnet, Daphne Brooks, and others.