



# **"THE CARIBBEAN RACISM AND SLAVERY" AND "REPRESENTATION OF BLACK BEAUTY IN THE CARIBBEAN"**

OSUN Connected Learning Contest Winner

**Nemesio Gil**

**Bard Early College New Orleans**

**Course: World Literature in Translation**

The week's assignment introduced two elements of "Slavery in the Caribbean": First, the concepts of race and ethnicity, as seen by the Afro-Caribbean Linguist Mervyn Alleyne in his "Construction and Representation of Race and Ethnicity in the Caribbean and the World (2005)." Second, the representation of Black beauty in the Caribbean through the novels "Banana Bottom (1933)" and "Unburnable (2009)" by Afro-Caribbean authors Claude McKay and Marie-Elena John, respectively. This section of the course not only opened the door into an area of the Black experience which needs to be studied even more in our US school system (i.e. the Afro- Caribbean experience), but also served as a basis to discuss concepts of representation of Black beauty in the US and the Caribbean.

## **World Literature in Translation**

A comparative approach across the five continents, this course will give a critical overview of a variety of literary genres. Selected samples of poetry, drama, short fiction, and graphic novels will represent each continent's cultural and ideological stamp in order to better analyze cross-referenced archetypes, themes, and trends in literary production outside the United States and Great Britain. The journey will take off across Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia, Europe and Africa and will broaden students' scope of critique, comprehension, visualization, and synthesis of the richness found in literary texts around the world.

## **Practical and pedagogical value**

The assignment was successful because students had the opportunity of broadening their view and knowledge of concepts of race, ethnicity, slavery, and the visualization of black beauty through the eyes of Afro-Caribbean fiction writers. Last semester students were asking to read beyond African-American history of slavery in the United States, which they had been studying since elementary school. This particular week opened doors for students to start identifying themselves with other Afro-descendants through literature, letting them know that we are all united by the same racial experience that trespasses the local or national realm.

In the remote learning context, they were able to follow instructions carefully and further develop organizational and study skills necessary for their upcoming first year in college where they might work in hybrid courses (i.e., lecture + online access homework). They were able to follow the audio informational lectures along with their "Reader." This continued to help them appreciate both traditional and modern modes of education.

## **The Assignment**

Title: "The Caribbean Racism and Slavery" and "Representation of Black Beauty in the Caribbean."

Description: The week's assignment required students to:

- a. Access their paperback copy of the "World Literature Reader."
- b. Access and listen to three short audio lectures recorded by the professor and published on Youtube to follow along the "Reader.":

AUDIO 1: <https://youtu.be/Q116MxHkn8Q>

AUDIO 2: <https://youtu.be/jVrreMJviRM>

AUDIO 3: <https://youtu.be/AyXKhuaxRz4>

- c. Open attached PDF with information and instructions to answer questions on the texts under discussion.

- d. Participate in the class Discussion Group on the Jupiter Educational Platform.