

Chapter 1 : Analysis of "Africa" by David Diop "Isle of Sage"

David Diop, (born July 9, , Bordeaux, Fr. died , Dakar, Senegal), one of the most talented of the younger French West African poets of the s, whose tragic death in an airplane crash cut short a promising career.

Africa of proud warriors in ancestral savannahs
Africa of whom my grandmother sings
On the banks of the distant river I have never known you
But your blood flows in my veins
Your beautiful black blood that irrigates the fields
The blood of your sweat
The sweat of your work
The work of your slavery
Africa, tell me
Africa
Is this your back that is unbent
This back that never breaks under the weight of humiliation
This back trembling with red scars
And saying no to the whip under the midday sun
But a grave voice answers me
Impetuous child that tree, young and strong
That tree over there
Splendidly alone amidst white and faded flowers
That is your Africa springing up anew
springing up patiently, obstinately
Whose fruit bit by bit acquires
The bitter taste of liberty.

David began writing whilst in school. Thus, David Mandessi Diop can be referred to as one of the youngest African poet. Although, Diop is of an African descent, he spent most of his life in France. Diop recognised the plight of African nations in colonialism. Diop thus fought for Africa through his poems. His poems are symbolic of his political resistance against French colonial rule.. Sadly, Diop passed away along with his wife in , precisely on the 29th of August in the crash of Air France Flight while returning to France from Dakar. The great African poet died at the age of 33, but it is indeed true that his work and legacy live on even in his death. One of his amazing work, widely recognised and read is "Africa" or "Africa My Africa". In the first line, Diop refers to Africa as being "of proud warriors in ancestral savannahs". Before colonialism, Africa was subdivided into groups and each group had their warrior who also doubled most times as the king or leader of the tribe or group. They would lead their people in times of war. The Shark king overpowered the French Expedition in and made them pay for using the Cotonou port. Cetshwo fought against the British and caused them the biggest defeat which they never had from any African leader who opposed them at that time. He went as far as killing the heir to the French throne; Prince Napoleon. Africa is known as a tropical grassland which is one of the best definition and example of a savannah and according to Diop, "proud warriors" dwell in these "ancestral savannahs". Why does Diop refer to the savannahs as "ancestral"? In the second line, Diop mentions "Africa" again. This time, he speaks of Africa from what he has been told. His "grandmother sings" of Africa to him as a child. It was a culture in Africa- and still is- for knowledge to be passed through folktales and songs. Due to the absence of relevant punctuation, line 3 and line 4 is interpreted in two different views. First, line 3 could be an enjambment into line 4. Thus it would read: Most likely referring to the fact that his grandmother was a victim of slave trade. If she sings of Africa from the banks of " the distant river" then she is away from her soil; Africa. The poem would therefore read: On the banks of the distant river, I have never known you. This is the poet saying that he is on "the banks of the distant river" and even though his "grandmother sings" of Africa, he has "never known" Africa. Instead, he spent his after primary school life in France where he studied. Even though he was being told stories and tales of Africa, he was unable to experience these stories for himself because he was "on the banks of distant rivers". In the next line, Diop affirms his status as an African by saying "But your blood flows in my veins". Diop calls it "beautiful" and "black". Two things significantly occur here. The first being, Diop makes a great significant reference to the African race by using the word "black". By referring to the African blood as "Beautiful black blood" he also depicts the general skin colour "black". He calls the African skin "beautiful". He therefore describes his source of life as "beautiful His source of life is that which "irrigates the fields". The field referred to by Diop is that of the colonial masters and every white man who had a black slave or more. Slaves were taken overseas and there was often a bid for them by white men. Most of the buyers were owners of huge plantations and they needed a lot of manpower to take care of their plantations. Their work is as though it were sweat, salty and unappealing to taste because it is forced labour and the products are unappealing to the workers- the slaves. And like a circle, Diop returns to the very beginning where he says that their blood "irrigates the fields". In other words, they are in slavery to work and the work of their slavery is the irrigation of fields. He asks her Africa , "Is this your back that is unbent". But, like Diop says, Africa remains

"unbent". The back in the human body is the system which holds everything together. If the back is damaged, the body is damaged. It refuses to give in and up to the strokes and horse whips of the white man. It "never breaks under the weight of humiliation" even though it trembles with "red scars" and it says "no to the whip under the midday sun". Africa answers him; "But a grave voice answers me Impetuous child that tree, young and strong That tree over there Splendidly alone amidst white and faded flowers That is your Africa springing up anew springing up patiently, obstinately Whose fruit bit by bit acquires The bitter taste of liberty. She calls him an "impetuous child" as though he were in haste to draw up a conclusion as to who Africa is. Africa is referred to as a tree which is quite symbolic. A tree is seen as a source of life. Its roots are planted in the soil and it grows with time, to produce fruits. The beauty of a tree is in the watering. A tree which is poorly watered ends up with dry and brown leaves while a tree well watered produces green leaves and healthy fruits. Africa is the tree which is "splendidly alone amidst white and faded flowers". Ever seen a black tree? Probably not, but Diop did. Africa as a tree grows and glows magnificently alone in the midst of "white and faded flowers". Unlike Africa who is a "young and strong" tree, the white men are flowers, which is essentially a product of a plant or tree. Although they are flowers, Africans see them beyond the facade of flimsy glories. Africa springs up "patiently" and "obstinately". She grows steadily without rushing, but stubbornly and persistent, unwilling to bend under the whip of the horse skin. As a fruit bearing tree, Africa bears fruit whose lips acquire "the bitter taste of liberty". They are the ones who experienced the period of independence and many more who still fight against neo-colonialism.

In performing some research into the poem and David Diop, I found out he was a revolutionary writer, focusing on the colonial period and the freeing of the African.

This poetic male tradition is upheld through allegorical means where Africa is conceptualized as a mother to the Black populace born from her landscaped body. His metaphorical body of work offers a depth of meaning and concludes with a message of hope, reminding Africans that they can rise above the colonial system. It almost gives us the sense that the earth itself is not a lifeless thing but is somehow alive. The representation of Africa as an animate female is a long standing colonial tradition; however, the damaging image is subverted to some extent in the poem. This choral effect is also typical of apostrophic poetry which is usually a kind of invocation. The musical quality of the poem is additionally increased through assonance which is essential in a free verse poem. For Diop, the repetition of vowel sounds enable him to make the beginning lines sound hoisted and spiritual. Perhaps the distant river bank the grandmother sings on suggests the far-removed location of the African generation from its hallowed cultural source where it can never go back to. Or the poet could simply be remembering his dead grandmother who he believes extols Africa from the distant, mystical land of the ancestors, only linked to the real world through a river journey. The blood is not only representative of his familial ties to Africa but the cause of the people which pulses within him. It is through the struggle and hard work of black people that the encountering nations like France were able to reap the harvest financial, infrastructural profits and build domains. Thus, Mother Africa is represented as a slave that was physically abused and exploited economically. Her oppression is continuous and exemplified through parallelism with the run-on lines from which keeps the reader anticipating what comes next: Even the organization of speech sounds reinforce meaning as the lines move from monosyllables sweat, work to trisyllables slavery and disyllables children. The tempo of the lines eventually become slower as articulation becomes as leaden as the colonial transition of the African people. The personal suffering of the mother is symbolic of the trepidation of the African continent, traumatized by colonial experiences. Some may argue that the persona addressing Mother Africa is displeased with her character which was once proud and resistant to western culture. This adversely gives license to the stereotype of women as compliant towards domination. However, in a similar reading, I could add that Diop does not romanticize Mother Africa which would contradict the actual struggling, marginalized position of women in Africa. She additionally alters the way he envisions her, she assigns the image of redemption to a pomological entity where Africans are symbolic fruits that develop, adapt, diversify and evolve even while faced with threats to their ecosystem: The lines may indicate that the poet does not truly perceive what Africa is; the constant use of demonstratives tells the reader that Africa Tree of Life is far removed from the female speaker. The answering female suggests that Mother Africa is not a burdened or super woman but a flourishing being, or rather, an ever-growing metaphysical tree which slowly renews itself, with the aid of a resourceful generation, after being hacked by colonial forces. The parasitic flowering plant of white domination will see its end and the continent of Africa will rise, unwavering, to bursting greatness. The poem ends with interlaced rhymes and a rising cadence which gives a pleasing effect, indicating that the poem has finally arrived at a thoughtful and substantial conclusion. The ending lines are paradoxical as you would not associate liberty with bitterness, yet, a deeper truth is implied through the contrast: Independence is often a goal achieved through sacrifice, coups, chaos and hard work. Nonetheless, the poem ultimately communicates that the fight is worth it; the African mind must exercise both continental and state optimism and turn away from colonial resignation in the walk towards socio-cultural and economic freedom.

Chapter 3 : Literature Worms: Africa by David Diop

David Mandessi Diop () was a revolutionary African poet born in France to parents of West African descent, and an active member of the Negritude movement.

The poem also celebrates Africa and black beauty, which is one of the tenets of the Negritude philosophy. Before Negritude, the concept of blackness was viewed negatively as an evil phenomenon which must be dreaded, derided, and repudiated. With the attainment of freedom through political independence, Africa will grow strong again and reclaim her lost glory and respectability in the comity of nations. Listed comrades of the struggling centuries To the keen clamour of the Negro from Africa to the Americas It is the sign of the dawn The sign of brotherhood which comes to nourish the dreams of men MPA, p. And necklaces of laughter hung around our days Days sparkling with ever new joys MPA, p. In this poem, which K. Here, the continents of Europe and Africa are compared and contrasted. Furthermore, as a bird of prey, the vulture is merciless in its treatment of its victims. Because Africa was living in prosperity and abundance, it was able to offer support and relief to others. The colonial period also witnessed intense pillage and despoliation of cherished cultural values. Equally remarkable is his use of contrast where, for example, the glorious African past is discussed against a backdrop of the sordid colonial era. His poems move inexorably towards a triumphant affirmation. The consequences for those who forsake or denigrate the indigenous African culture are better imagined than stated. The poet specifically states in the last line of the lyric that they will meet with loneliness. For the poet, the black woman dancer symbolizes grace, integrity, and exquisite charm. On the one hand, he asserts and defends vigorously the beauty, strength, and integrity of Africa and its cultural values. His respect and love for Africa is without question. On the other hand, he castigates anyone who denigrates Africa and what it stands for. His mode of attack includes the use of repetition, satire, and ridicule. Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd. Reed and Wake London: Oxford University Press, , p. Penguin Books, , pp. Works Cited Diop, David.

Chapter 4 : Naija Poets Analysis : Differentiate Between Africa By David Diop And Africa By Raphael Arma

David Mandessi Diop is a Poet from Senegal.() David Diop was one of the most promising French West African young poets, whose short career, however, ended in an air-crash off Dakar in Diop lived an uprooted life, moving frequently from his childhood onwards between France and West Africa.

David Mandessi Diop David Mandessi Diop " , born in France to African parents, was a poet of the Negritude movement, rejecting colonialism and Western values and celebrating African people and culture. Although he died when he was only 33 years old, his poems, described as angry and revolutionary, yet hopeful and optimistic, are read and studied today in Africa and around the world. Born in Exile Diop was born in Bordeaux, France, in , the third of five children. His mother was from Cameroon and his father was from Senegal, and as a child Diop traveled often between Europe and Africa. He attended primary school in Senegal and secondary school in France, where one of his teachers was Leopold Sedar Senghor " , who would become president of Senegal in Diop began to publish poetry while still in school; one of his influences was Aime Cesaire born , the writer and later statesman from Martinique who, with Senghor and others then in Paris, began the Negritude movement. Diop spent most of his life in France. He suffered bouts of tuberculosis while growing up and spent months in sanitariums. At one time he planned to study medicine but changed his focus to liberal arts and obtained two baccalaureats and a licence es lettres in order to teach in secondary school. He married in , and his wife, Virginia Kamara, is said to have inspired his poetry. Returned to Africa in Adulthood Diop returned to Africa with his wife and children in the s, a time when tabloid publications were playing a sizable role in the development of African poetry. A journal called Bingo began publication in Senegal in and published poems by Diop and Senghor as well as other emerging African writers. Diop was also published in Presence Africaine, and he began to call for independence in Africa. His first and only remaining book of poems, Coups de pillon Hammer Blows and Pounding , was published in Diop and many other Africans volunteered to work in the new government under Ahmed Sekou Toure who would remain in power until Diop was so employed on August 25, , when he and his wife died in a plane crash over the Atlantic in the course of a flight between Dakar and France. The manuscript for his second book of poetry was also lost in the crash, meaning that the twenty-some poems of Coups de pillon are all that remain of his work. Even so, he is one of the most widely read poets of the Negritude and anticolonialist movements, and at least one school le college David Diop in Senegal bears his name. Poetry Balanced Bitterness with Hope The Negritude movement expressed opposition to colonialism and assimilation and lifted up African values and culture, and some of its writers expressed much bitterness and pessimism. Diop, on the other hand, is seen as more inclined to express hopefulness and comfort for exiles actual and figurative. Wilfred Cartey, in Whispers From A Continent, notes, "within the body of each single poem Diop counterpoints notes of exile with recurrent chords of hope and return. Although within each poem harsh and gentle statements, negatives and positives, may alternate, Diop closes, almost without exception, on a note of optimism. Return may require combat and resistance; it may also be found in memories of Africa. African women represent for Diop the solace to be found in the return. An article in the Encyclopedia Britannica called Diop "the most extreme of the Negritude writers" because he rejected the idea that the colonial experience had done anything good for Africa. He is also said to have believed that political independence had to take place before Africa could come into its own culturally and economically. Thus in his poems," said Cartey, "there is always a movement away from the negative effects of oppression to the positive possibility of regeneration in the poetic discovery of truth. The colonials are called "mystificateurs," disguising the real effects of their inflicted culture with inflated or pious language. In "Vultures," Diop wrote that "civilization kicked us in the face" and " holy water slapped our cringing brows. Elsewhere, Africa is viewed as enduring forever and offering healing to Africans. In "A Une Danseuse Noire," which some consider his best poem, the black dancing woman represents Africa and its offer of regeneration. She inspires Africans to unchain the whole continent, and Diop promises her "For you we will remake Ghana and Timbuktu. Books Cartey, Wilfred, Whispers from a Continent: Cite this article Pick a style below, and copy the text for your bibliography.

Chapter 5 : Alakowe Online Review: Africa by David Diop

On July 9, , David Mandessi Diop was born in Bordeaux, France, to a Cameroonian mother and a Senegalese father. Although he grew up in France and lived most of his life there, Diop spent significant time living and teaching in Africa, which helped reinforce his opposition to European society.

Click on a picture to enlarge Biography: David Mandessi Diop is a Poet from Senegal. Diop lived an uprooted life, moving frequently from his childhood onwards between France and West Africa. After his father died, he was raised by his mother. Most of his life Diop lived in France, and he often expressed his longing to Africa in his poems: In he married Virginia Kamara, who was the center of many of his poems. Despite his French upbringing and education, Diop empathized with the African plight against French colonialism. In the s Diop returned to Africa to take part in the rebuilding of Senegal. His first book of poems, *Coups de pillon* , called for revolution and attacked the domination of European culture in Africa. Diop worked as a teacher in Dakar and a principal of a secondary school in Kindia, Guinea. The country had gained independence in and as a result French administration was rapidly withdrawn. Toure governed from to Diop died on a journey over the Atlantic with his wife on August 25, ; their plane crashed on returning to France from Dakar. Most of his work was destroyed with him, among them the manuscript of his second volume of poems. Only the 22 poems that were published before his death still remain. He has been connected with the Negritude school of writing, especially with his themes of the harmful effects of inferiority complex. As a tool of protest, he employed a colloquial style. Diop criticized Western values and colonialism, encouraged for self-sacrifices for the collective good, and praised the strength of African women. To gain the attention of his audience, Diop employed the techniques of oral expression, rhythmic repetition, oratorical tone and assertion. It referred to the sense of a common Negro inheritance, revolt against colonialist values, and nostalgia for the beauty and glory of the African heritage.

Chapter 6 : Diop, David Mandessi | www.nxgvision.com

David Diop's poem "Africa" reflects his hope for an independent African nation, and the problems brought to the continent by colonialism. Through this poem and other writings, Mr. Diop attempts to give a message of hope and resistance to the people of Africa.

Chapter 7 : David Diop - Poetry & Biography of the Famous poet - All Poetry

Africa, by David Diop David Mandessi Diop () was a revolutionary African poet born in France but with parents of West African descent. His poems highlighted problems of Africa brought about by colonialism and gave a message to Africans to bring about change and freedom.

Chapter 8 : Nigerian Universities Research Topics: David Diop and Africa

David Diop is a Negritude poet who, perhaps more than any other African artist, stands for the growth and development of African socio-cultural and political values.

Chapter 9 : Africa by David Diop - Famous poems, famous poets. - All Poetry

Poetry analysis: Africa, by David Diop David Mandessi Diop () was a revolutionary African poet born in France but with parents of West African descent. His poems highlighted problems of Africa brought about by colonialism and gave a message to Africans to bring about change and freedom.