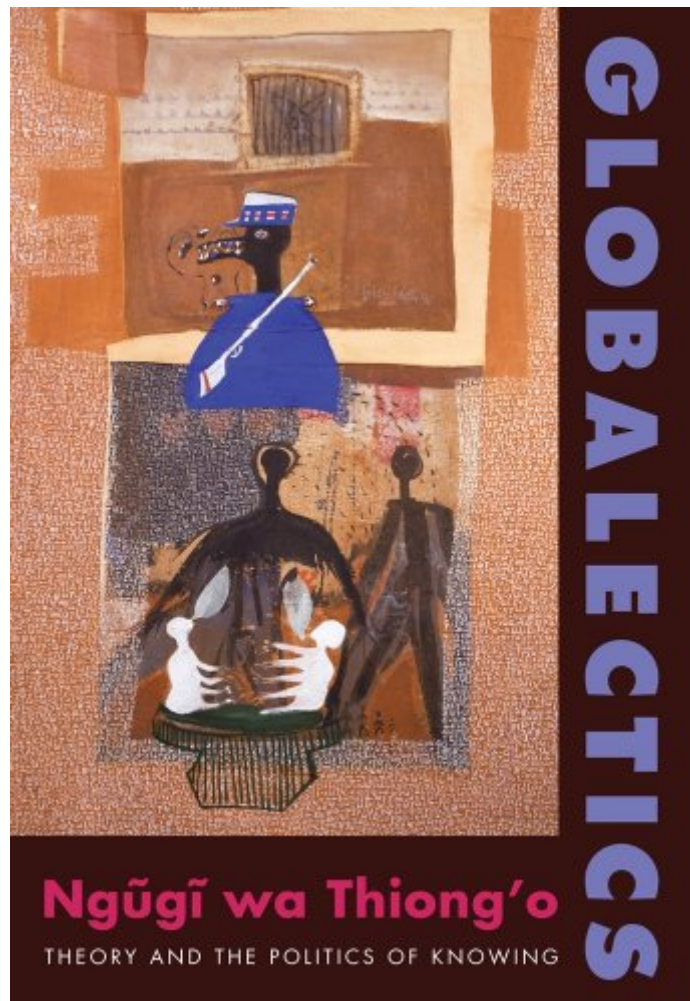


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Globallectics: Theory And The Politics Of Knowing (The Wellek Library Lectures)



Synopsis

A masterful writer working in many genres, Ngugi wa Thiong'o entered the East African literary scene in 1962 with the performance of his first major play, *The Black Hermit*, at the National Theatre in Uganda. In 1977 he was imprisoned after his most controversial work, *Ngaahika Ndeenda* (*I Will Marry When I Want*), produced in Nairobi, sharply criticized the injustices of Kenyan society and unequivocally championed the causes of ordinary citizens. Following his release, Ngugi decided to write only in his native Gikuyu, communicating with Kenyans in one of the many languages of their daily lives, and today he is known as one of the most outspoken intellectuals working in postcolonial theory and the global postcolonial movement. In this volume, Ngugi wa Thiong'o summarizes and develops a cross-section of the issues he has grappled with in his work, which deploys a strategy of imagery, language, folklore, and character to "decolonize the mind." Ngugi confronts the politics of language in African writing; the problem of linguistic imperialism and literature's ability to resist it; the difficult balance between orality, or "orature," and writing, or "literature"; the tension between national and world literature; and the role of the literary curriculum in both reaffirming and undermining the dominance of the Western canon. Throughout, he engages a range of philosophers and theorists writing on power and postcolonial creativity, including Hegel, Marx, Lévi-Strauss, and Aimé Césaire. Yet his explorations remain grounded in his own experiences with literature (and orature) and reworks the difficult dialectics of theory into richly evocative prose.

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Customer Reviews

Ngugi's wa Thiongo's GLOBALECTICS is another masterful piece from a man that remains to date one of the best literary minds in Africa, and indeed, in the world. In this pithy book, he makes a case for the reconceptualization of the preeminence of global literature. To paraphrase him, world literature, of which the postcolonial is an integral part, is our common heritage as much as the air we breathe. Thus, Globalectics becomes the way of reading world literature. According to Ngugi, Globalectics, derived from the shape of the globe, is the mutual containment of hereness and there-ness in time and place. In his view, globalectical reading means breaking open the prison house of imagination built by theories. This literary vantage point presupposes that the act of reading becomes also a process of self-examination. This book delves into a myriad of other literary concepts, not least of which is the symbiotic relationship that exists between Orature and Literature. This truly is a masterpiece! I will be including it as required reading for the postcolonial literature course that I teach at the University of Indianapolis because I perceive the book to be germane to any course that focuses on postcolonial discourse. I have the conviction that all students of postcolonial theory at college level should be given the opportunity to read this fine book. Instructors of postcolonial literature and theory would find this book a potent working tool. Dr. Peter Wuteh Vakunta, Professor of Francophone Literature and Critical Theory

Another masterpiece from the prolific, waywardly gifted and thought-provoking Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Once I finished reading this book, I wondered why wa Thiong'o has never won the Nobel Prize for Literature, and is not as universally acknowledged in the world of literature. The entire world is a better place in my view for wa Thiong'o's brilliantly articulated theories that he has enunciated persuasively in this book. I recommend this book to all those with a keen interest in the theory of literature from the African perspective.

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