

History/Sociology 298
Special Topics: Topics in African History and Culture
Department of History and Sociology, Moravian College
Instructor: Dr. Akbar Keshodkar
Fall 2014

Office Hours: Tuesdays, Thursday 10:30 am – 12 pm, or by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Africa is a diverse continent, with different regions (North Africa, the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, Central Africa, West Africa, East Africa, and Southern Africa), societies, histories, and cultures. Today, it also is the fastest growing continent, with over 50% of the population under the age of thirty. Given the turbulent memory of colonial rule and the rapid rate of socio-economic and political change taking place throughout the continent in the post-colonial era, Africans, like others around the world, are engaged in defining their local sense of belonging in an increasingly globalizing world. Accordingly, this course is to introduce and provide students with a more balanced understanding of African cultures, their modern histories, traditions, diversity, innovation, and emerging developments throughout the continent in the contemporary era of globalization. The course is divided into four parts:

- Framing the study of modern Africa
- Transition from colonialism to post-colonial era
- The everyday lives of people throughout Africa
- Africa's place in global society in the era of globalization

Students will further explore these topics by engaging with African literature in order to better understand indigenous perspectives on historical and cultural conditions underpinning current developments and predicaments facing African societies.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the course, students should have improved their ability in:

- Developing an understanding of the diverse cultural milieu in modern Africa
- Identifying major themes shaping socio-economic and political developments in contemporary Africa
- Understanding the impact of globalization in African societies
- Engaging with primary and secondary sources and explore the relationship between text and context in the writing of African history
- Critically evaluating and interpreting a variety of primary sources and acquiring an awareness of the issues involved in interpreting primary sources
- Critically reading and evaluating stories about Africa in the media
- Developing skills for adequately writing a research paper

TEXT:

Required reading:

The following book is available for purchase at the college bookstore:

Soyinka-Airewele, Peyi and Rita Kiki Edozie (eds). Reframing Contemporary Africa: Politics, Culture and Society in the Global Era. Washington DC: CQ Press, 2010.
ISBN: 978-0-87289-407-5

Additional articles required for the course can be accessed through the college library electronic journal database or will be posted on blackboard.

Supplementary Reading:

Amoah, Michael. Nationalism, globalization, and Africa. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
Collins, Robert et al. (eds). Problems in the history of modern Africa. Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1997.

Ensminger, Jean. Making a market: the institutional transformation of an African society. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Enwezor, Okwui (ed). The short century: Independence and liberation movements in Africa, 1945-1994. Munich: Prestel, 2001.

Ferguson, James. Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006

Gordon, April. Transforming capitalism and patriarchy: Gender and development in Africa. Boulder, Col.: Lynne Rienner, 1996.

Moshi, Lioba and Abdulahi A. Osman (eds). Democracy and culture: An African perspective. London: Adonis & Abbey, 2008.

Ndulo, Muna and Margaret Grieco (eds). Power, gender and social change in Africa. Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K.: Cambridge Scholars Pub., 2009.

Newell Stephanie and Onookome Okome (eds). Popular culture in Africa : the episteme of the everyday. New York: Routledge, 2014.

Okome, Mojúbàolú Olúfúnké and Olufemi Vaughan (eds). Transnational Africa and globalization. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

Peterson, Derek and Giacomo Macola (eds). Recasting the past: History writing and political work in modern Africa. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009.

Reid, Richard. A History of Modern Africa: 1800 to the Present. London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

Young, Crawford. The post-colonial state in Africa: Fifty years of independence, 1960-2010. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012.

Websites:

BBC – The Story of Africa:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index.shtml>

Internet African History Sourcebook:

<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/africa/africasbook.asp>

Links to online resources for Africa:

<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/africa.htm>

African lives today:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/africanlives/front.htm>

African history archives:

<http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/30/index.html>

Annotated resource list from Africa:

http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Home_Page/WWW_Links.html

Politics and Governments in Africa:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/depts/por/afbase.htm>

Africa bibliographical database:

<http://www.africabib.org/>

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

1. *Attendance and Participation:* Students will be required to *attend* class regularly and *participate* in discussions. Questions, feedback, and student interaction are an integral part of the learning process, and will supplement lectures and films. Students should come prepared, having read the assigned materials prior to coming to class. Students will be expected to play a prominent role in leading class discussions. Chronic absences, tardiness and leaving early will adversely affect your grade. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class on random days and tardiness or absences on those occasions will result in a deduction of 5 points per infraction from the class participation grade. Absences due to illness or emergencies must be communicated to the instructor prior to the class.
2. *Basic classroom rules:* While in class, students are expected to use appropriate language with the instructor as well with each other, have their cell phones on silent and not be involved in personal conversations with each other or any activities which would disrupt the classroom environment. Infraction of these rules will result in a deduction of 20 points from the class participation grade and the student being asked to leave the classroom.
3. *Plagiarism:* I take plagiarism, copying someone else's work and representing it as your own, very seriously. This applies to all work submitted for the course. Students will be required to submitted all work done outside of the classroom on Safe Assign, through Blackboard. Plagiarism, academic dishonesty, or cheating will result in an automatic grade of F for the course. If a student's work is suspected of plagiarism, it will be their responsibility to demonstrate evidence reflecting the originality of the work, such as all notes and other materials utilized in developing the submitted work. Students should refer to the college's academic handbook for more information about plagiarism.
4. *Blackboard:* All assignments, additional reading materials, announcements and information related to the course will be posted on Blackboard. It is the students' responsibility to check Blackboard and their Moravian College email on a regular basis throughout the semester.
5. *Accommodating disabilities:* Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability must contact Ms. Elaine Mara, assistant director of academic support services for academic and disability support, at the lower level of Monocacy Hall, or by calling [610-861-1401](tel:610-861-1401). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

6. *Assessment:* There will be three quizzes/tests on reading materials over the course of the semester. The quizzes will commence at the beginning of the class. Students should note that no makeup quiz will be offered and those arriving late will not receive extra time to complete the quizzes.
7. *Analysis/Reflection Paper:* Over the course of the semester, students will submit five reflection papers, which will provide an analysis of and response to materials covered in class the previous week. These reaction papers should critically evaluate the issues discussed in class from the previous week and further incorporate personal opinions on the materials covered in class and should engage course materials. Each reflection paper should be a minimum of two pages in length.
8. *Research Paper and Presentation:* As part of the course, students will read a novel pertaining to modern Africa and write a 10 page research paper examining the relevance of contents in the novels to developments in contemporary African history and culture. Instructions for the paper will be posted in the assignment section on blackboard. The paper should be submitted typed, doubled spaced, in Times New Roman font, Type 12, with standard one-inch margins and with proper citations and bibliography. Students may only use academic journals and published books for acquiring materials. Under no circumstances are online sites that are not academic journals, considered acceptable for citation on papers. Students must also ensure to use correct grammar, as that will account for 10% of the grade on each paper. No late papers will be accepted. Students will also be required to make a 15 minutes presentation on their research papers, which will account for 5% of the overall grade in the course.
9. *Midterm and Final Exam:* There will neither be a midterm nor a final exam in this course.
10. *Explanation and Breakdown of Grades:* Grades for the class will be given with the A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F system

Attendance and Class Participation	25%
Analysis and Reflection papers	20%
Quizzes	30%
Research Paper	25%
11. *Withdrawals/Incompletes:* Under no circumstances will a student receive an academic incomplete if they are failing the course or if they have done little or no work. In circumstances that an Incomplete is given, it will be the responsibility of the student to ensure that the work is submitted on time and meets the requirements of the course. If work is not submitted by the deadline given, the student will automatically receive an “F”.

COURSE OUTLINE/SCHEDULE

The course will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:55 am – 10:05 am. Students are required to come prepared for each class, having completed the reading assignments beforehand. Unless indicated, all the required readings listed below are from Soyinka-Airewele and Edozie volume (AE). Other required reading materials will be posted on Blackboard and can also be accessed through the college library's electronic Journal collection (BB).

I. Framing Modern Africa

Week 1:

- 26 Aug 2014 Introduction to the course
Soyinka-Airewele and Edozie, "Introduction" (AE, p. 1-3)
- 28 Aug 2014 Soyinka-Airewele and Edozie, "Reframing contemporary Africa: Beyond global imaginaries" (AE, p. 4-33)
Mamdani, "Commentary: Reconfiguring the study of Africa" (AE, p. 34-36)

Week 2:

- 2 Sept 2014 Osondu, "Not out of Africa? Sifting facts from fiction in the new balkanization of Africa" (AE, p. 36-46)
Owomoyela, "The myth and reality of Africa: A nudge towards a cultural revolution" (AE p. 47-60)
Excerpts from "Out of Africa"
- 4 Sept 2014 Van Binsbergen. "Globalization and virtuality: Analytical problems posed by the contemporary transformation of African societies," in *Development and Change* Vol. 29 (1998), 873-903 (BB)

II. From Colonialism to Independence

Week 3:

- 9 Sept 2014 **Reflection paper 1 due**
Pearce, R. "The Colonial Office and Planned Decolonization in Africa," in *African Affairs*, Vol. 83, No. 330 (Jan., 1984), pp. 77-93 (BB)
Charles de Gaulle, French Premier: Speech at Constantine, Algeria, October 3, 1958 (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1958degaulle-algeria1.asp>)
All-African People's Conference: Resolution on Imperialism and Colonialism, Accra, December 5-13, 1958
(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1958-aapc-res1.asp>)
Documentary: People's Century – African Independence
- 11 Sept 2014 Akurang-Parry, "Remembering the forgotten histories of enslavement and African contribution to abolition in Africa: The case of the Gold Coast (AE, p. 82-99)
Soyinka-Airewele, "Colonial legacies: Ghosts, gulags, and the silenced trauma of empire" (AE, p. 100-105)
Kwame Nkrumah: *I Speak of Freedom*, 1961
(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1961nkrumah.asp>)

Week 4:

16 Sept 2014

Quiz on materials from weeks 1-3

Graham, "Revisiting development in ancient and medieval Africa," (AE, p. 105-130)

Nyerere, J. "A United States of Africa," in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 1(1): 1-6, 1963 (BB)

Nyerere, J. *The Arusha Declaration*, 1967.

(<http://www.blackpast.org/arusha-declaration-1967>)

18 Sept 2014

Cooper, F. "Mau Mau and the discourse of decolonization," in *The Journal of African History*, 29(2): 313-320, 1988 (BB)

Berman, B. "Nationalism, ethnicity and modernity: the paradox of Mau Mau," in *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 25(2): 181-206, 1991 (BB)

Week 5:

23 Sept 2014

Reflection paper 2 due at beginning of class

Dubow, S. "Afrikaner nationalism, apartheid and the conceptualization of race," in *The Journal of African History*, 33(2): 209-237, 1992 (BB)

Desmond Tutu: *The Question of South Africa*, 1984

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1984tutu.asp>)

Documentary: Excerpts from *People's Century – Apartheid*.

25 Sept 2014

Hirschmann, D. "The black consciousness movement in South Africa," in *Journal of Southern African Studies*,

Excerpts from "Cry Freedom" (1987)

Documentary on Apartheid in South Africa (to be watched outside class):

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOA66AOG52M>)

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

(<http://www.blackpast.org/constitution-republic-south-africa-1996>)

Week 6:

30 Sept 2014

Diamond, L. "Class, ethnicity and the democratic state: Nigeria, 1950-1966," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 25(3): 457-489, 1983

(BB)

Biafra Declaration of Independence, 1967

(<http://www.blackpast.org/biafras-declaration-independence-1967>)

2 Oct 2014

Reflection paper 3 due at beginning of class

Monga, C. "Civil society and sociopolitical change in Africa: A brief theoretical commentary," (AE, p. 144-156)

Edozie, R.K. "New frames in African democratic politics: discourse trajectories" (AE, p. 156-176)

III. The everyday lives of people in Africa

Week 7:

7 Oct 2014 African Lives – read all 8 parts (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/africanlives/front.htm>)

9 Oct 2014

Africa Speaks (read only the sections identified below):

Life stories 1: <http://patstoll.org/afspeaknew/lifesto1.htm>

Life stories 2: <http://patstoll.org/afspeaknew/lifesto2.htm>

Heritage: <http://patstoll.org/afspeaknew/heritage.htm>

Week 8:

14 Oct 2014:

NO CLASS (Fall Recess)

16 Oct 2014:

Mbembe, LA and S. Nuttall. “Writing the world from an African metropolis,” in *Public Culture*, 16(3): 347-372, 2004 (BB)

Africa Speaks (read only the following sections):

Town and country 1: <http://patstoll.org/afspeaknew/twncntr1.htm>

Town and country 2: <http://patstoll.org/afspeaknew/twncntr2.htm>

Week 9:

21 Oct 2014

Quiz on materials from weeks 4-8

Adesanmi, P. “Reshaping power and the public sphere: The political voices of African writers” (AE, p. 258-274)

23 Oct 2014

Akudinobi, J. “African cinema: Visions, meanings and measures” (AE, p. 275-290)

Diawara, M. “Popular culture and oral traditions in African film,” in *Film Quarterly*, 41(3): 6-14, 1988

Week 10:

28 Oct 2014

Ejikeme, A. “Engendering African history: A tale of sex, politics and power” (AE, p. 291-306)

Africa Speaks (read only the following sections):

Marriage 1: <http://patstoll.org/afspeaknew/mariage1.htm>

Marriage 2: <http://patstoll.org/afspeaknew/mariage3.htm>

30 Oct 2014

Sundal, K. “Between multiple ideals of feminism: An intercontinental engagement with womanhood: A young scholar’s response and commentary” (AE, p. 307-318)

Female circumcision on Africa:

http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1995/10/female-circumcision-comes-to-america/306051/?single_page=true

IV. Africa’s engagement with the broader world

Week 11:

4 Nov 2014

Reflection paper 4 due at the beginning of class

Mbembe, L.A. "At the edge of the world: Boundaries, territoriality, and sovereignty in Africa," translated by S. Rendell, in *Public Culture*, 12(1): 259-284, 2000 (BB)

6 Nov 2014

Cheru, F. "The global economic order and its socioeconomic impact: The African perspective" (AE, p. 195-217)
Mutua, M. "Human Rights in Africa: The Limited Promise of Liberalism" (AE, p. 334-350)
United Nations: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
(<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>)

Week 12:

11 Nov 2014

Campbell, H. "China in Africa: Challenging US global hegemony," in *Third World Quarterly*, 29(1): 89-105, 2008 (BB)

13 Nov 2014

Yohannes, O. "The new oil gulf of Africa: Global geopolitics and enclave oil-producing economics" (AE, p 218-240)

Week 13:

18 Nov 2014

Quiz on materials from weeks 9-12

Millennial challenges for contemporary African affairs: Reconstructing from within: A commentary (AE, p. 321-333)

Millennium Development Goals for Africa, Executive Summary, 2013:

<http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/Millennium%20Development%20Goals%20%28MDGs%29%20Report%202013%20-%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>

20 Nov 2014

Craddock, S. "The politics of HIV/AIDS in Africa: Representation and the political economy of disease (AE, p. 241-253)

Week 14:

25 Nov 2014

Research Papers due at the beginning of class

Ihonvbere, J. "The 'irrelevant' state, ethnicity and the quest for nationhood in Africa," in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 17(1): 42-60, 1994

Ackah, W. "The intersection of African identities in the twenty-first century: Old and new diasporas and the African continent (AE, p. 131-140)

27 Nov 2014:

NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)

Week 15:

2 Dec 2014

Research Paper Presentations

4 Dec 2014

Reflection paper 5 due at the beginning of class

Edozie, R.K and P. Soyinka-Airewele, "Reframing Africa in the global era: the relevance of post-colonial studies" (AE, p. 375-394)