

AFS_OX 263
TTh 10-11:30
Language 201

INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN STUDIES Fall 2005

Instructor: Dr. Edna G. Bay
Office: 207 Humanities
Office hours: usually before or after class on Tuesdays and Thursdays
Phone: 4-4724 (O) or 770-938-5217 (H) – please do not call the home phone after 10 p.m.

Course Content:

This course introduces the multidisciplinary study of the sub-Saharan African continent through the exploration of a variety of forms: epic literature, feature and documentary film, classic novels, the visual arts, and scholarly literature drawn from the disciplines of anthropology, history, politics, public health, sociology and religion. A series of themes will be considered through studies of three representative regions/groups of peoples: the multinational Mande-speaking peoples and their neighbors in the Western Sudan; the Kikuyu of Kenya; and the peoples of the country of South Africa. Among questions to be considered are social organization and gender; colonialism, nationalism and the postcolonial experience; contemporary political and economic problems; religious traditions of Islam, Christianity and African religions; and the impact of HIV/AIDS. We begin with a look at the ways that Americans have learned to think about Africa.

Requirements:

Class participation. Attendance at all class meetings and **active** participation in discussion are essential to learning in this course. If you attend class regularly but never speak, you will receive less than an ‘A’ for participation. More than three absences from class will have an impact on your final grade.

Class communication will take place mainly on Learnlink. To prepare for class each day, you should do the following: 1) read the assignment well in advance, taking notes on key concepts; 2) spend time reflecting on its overall meaning, thinking particularly about how the assignment relates to other readings in the course; 3) be able to summarize the overall argument, make a comment about the importance and meaning of a particular passage or passages, and pose a question that you believe is crucial to the understanding of the text.

Five-minute map quizzes will be given at three points in the semester. Your performance on the map quizzes will become part of your participation grade.

Reading responses. You will submit written responses of 500-700 words to five of the class assignments. Responses are required for each of the three films. The remaining two

can be from the readings on any of the days marked with an *. Reading responses are due at the beginning of the class when that particular reading is being discussed. Late responses will not be accepted.

Films. Three feature films will be screened during the course of the semester. Special screening sessions will be arranged on the Monday and Tuesday of the week that the films are discussed (or on Wednesday and Thursday for the third film). If you are unable to attend one of the special screenings, you are responsible for checking the film out of the library and preparing the assignment on your own time.

Debate. You will participate on a debate team arguing about the impact of colonialism on Africa. At the beginning of the course you will be assigned to a team and will be expected to develop a body of notes for the debate. Those notes will be due on the date of the debate.

Presentation. At some time during the semester, you will make a 7-8 minute presentation, using PowerPoint if desired, on a topic related to the ways that Africa is represented.

Mid-term and Final. A mid-term exam will be given on October 18. The final exam will be given on the date determined by the registrar.

Grades

Grades will be calculated as follows:

Class participation	15%
Responses to readings	25%
Debate	5%
Presentation	15%
Mid-term	20%
Final exam	20%

Books:

The following books have been ordered through the Oxford bookstore. The remainder of the readings are on electronic reserve or will be distributed by the instructor.

Mariama Ba, *So Long a Letter*
D. T. Niane, *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*
Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *A Grain of Wheat*
Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*

Class Schedule

Sept. 1 – Introduction

Sept. 6 – Curtis Keim, *Mistaking Africa*, Chapters 1, 2, and 5

*Sept. 8 – Niane, *Sundiata*, pp. vii-26

Sept. 13 – Niane, *Sundiata*, pp. 26-84

*Sept. 15 – Richard A. Schroeder, “‘Gone to their Second Husbands’: Marital Metaphors and Conjugal Contracts in the Gambia’s Female Garden Sector,” pp. 85-105 in “*Wicked Women and the Reconfiguration of Gender in Africa* (2001)

Viewing of *Mandabi*, a feature film by Ousmane Sembene, Monday and Tuesday evenings, Sept. 19-20

*Sept. 20 – Keim, *Mistaking Africa*, Chapter 6

Sept. 22 – Discussion of *Mandabi*

Sept. 27 – Mariama Ba, *So Long*, pp. 1-46

*Sept. 29 – Mariama Ba, *So Long*, pp. 46-90
Student Presentations

Oct. 4 – Student Presentations

*Oct. 6 – Benjamin Ray, *African Religions: Symbol, Ritual and Community*, Chapter on African Islam

Oct. 11 – Fall break – no class

Oct. 13 – Allen F. Roberts and Mary Nooter Roberts, "A Saint in the City: Sufi Arts of Urban Senegal," *African Arts* (winter 2002), 52-73

Oct. 18 – Mid-term

Oct. 20 – Lecture on colonialism in Africa

A. Adu Boahen, “The Colonial Impact,” pp. 94-112 in *African Perspectives on Colonialism* (1987)

John Iliffe, “Colonial Change, 1918-1950” pp. 212-41 of *Africans, The History of a Continent* (1995)

Recommended:

Frederick Cooper, pp. 14-19 of “Introduction” to *Africa Since 1940* (2002)

Viewing of *The Kitchen Toto*, Monday and Tuesday evenings, Oct. 24-25

Oct. 25 – Benjamin Ray, *African Religions: Symbol, Ritual and Community*, Chapter on African Christianity

Oct. 27 – Discussion of *The Kitchen Toto*

Tabitha Kanogo, “Introduction” to *Squatters and the Roots of Mau Mau* (1987)

Nov. 1 – Student presentations

Nov. 3 – Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, pp. 1-121

Nov. 8 – Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, pp. 122-200

*Nov. 10 – Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, pp. 201-247

Nov. 15 – Debate on the impact of colonialism in Africa

Viewing of *Amandla! A Revolution in Four Part Harmony*, Wednesday or Thursday evenings, Nov. 16-17

Nov. 17 – Viewing of *Amandla!*

Nov. 22 – Discussion of *Amandla!*

Nov. 24 – Thanksgiving break – no class

*Nov. 29 – Mandela, *Long Walk*, pp. 17-85

Dec. 1 – Mandela, *Long Walk*, pp. 89-189

*Dec. 6 – Liz Walker, Graeme Reid, and Morna Cornell, *Waiting to Happen: HIV/AIDS in South Africa*, pp. 60-71, 76-87

Dec. 8 – Student Presentations

Dec. 13 - Wrap-up, class evaluation

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