

History/DAAS 247

Tuesdays/Thursdays, 10-11:30 am  
1300 Chemistry Building

## Modern Africa

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As a source of disease and as a vector for political instability, Africa is evermore in the news. This course will give you the tools they need to understand current events within a longer scope of time. The crises that seem to cripple African politics today are shaped by the economic, political and social changes that attended the 19th and 20th century. Any student of political science, economics, psychology, business or literature who wishes to understand Africa must first study its history, for that history sets the stage for the present.

The course will begin by examining how wide-ranging processes--the slave trade, colonial rule, nationalism, independence--transformed the social and political lives of African people. In the last part of the course we will narrow the focus to study human rights in contemporary Africa. Using a detailed study of a recent court trial in Kenya, we'll explore the tensions between "customary" marital arrangements and women's rights.

The core reading will be a set of 'primary' documents dealing with issues addressed in lectures. A number of the assigned texts are novels written by African authors who were involved in the politics of their time. During the semester students will write three short essays and one long essay. By the end of the course, students will have learned how to interpret evidence, synthesize disparate sources, and create compelling arguments about the relation between past and present.

### **Required Books** (available at the bookstore and also on 4 hour reserve in Shapiro Library)

Trevor Getz and Liz Clarke, *Abina and the Important Men: A Graphic History* (Oxford, 2011)  
Sol Plaatje, *Mhudi* (Waveland, 2013)  
David William Cohen and Atieno Odhiambo, *Burying SM: The Politics of Knowledge and the Sociology of Power in Africa* (Heinemann, 1995)  
Chinua Achebe, *Anthills of the Savannah* (Oxford, 1997 [1987])  
Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *A Grain of Wheat* (Penguin, 2002 [1967])  
Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (Anchor, 1994 [1958])

In addition, a number of required readings are posted to the course's CTools site. The readings available on CTools are marked with a \*\* below.

## Course Requirements

Attendance and participation: History/DAAS 247 meets as a whole twice a week for three hours total. You are likewise required to attend a weekly, hour-long discussion section. Regular attendance is mandatory, as students will be expected to participate actively in discussions.

The week's readings are to be prepared for your discussion section; in addition, readings will sometimes be discussed during the Thursday session of the class (as marked below). *You must bring the readings with you to your discussion section, and to the Thursday class as well.* You may either print the readings out or bring them on an e-reader, laptop or some other electronic device. Please come to class prepared with comments on what you found most intriguing, important, or problematic in the assigned texts and with specific ideas you would like to discuss. Your participation grade will be based on an assessment at each session of how much and how well you engaged with the readings in a serious and thoughtful manner. There will occasionally be response papers assigned, in which you write out your assessment of the week's reading.

Primary document interpretation: On Tuesday, 3 February, you'll turn in a 3 page analysis of one of the primary documents we're dealt with during weeks Two, Three or Four. Your paper should describe what the document teaches us about African history, using the analytical course readings and the lectures to cast light on the issues that the primary document raises.

Midterm short answer exam: to be administered in class on Thursday, 26 February. The exam will cover material discussed during Weeks One through Seven.

Midterm essay: Due on Thursday, 26 February. This essay will be 4-5 pages in length, and will concern the material covered during Weeks One through Seven.

Thematic essay: Due Thursday, 2 April. This essay will be 4-5 pages in length. It will address the question we deal with in Weeks Ten through Twelve: What did political independence mean for Africans?

Final short answer exam: will be administered on the day and time appointed by the University: Thursday, 28 April at 1:30 pm. The final will concern material covered during the second half of the semester.

Final essay: Due on the day the final exam is administered. This essay will be 7-8 pages in length, and will ask you to synthesize the readings we've done over the whole course.

Map quizzes: There are two of these: a physical geography test (on Thursday, 22 January) will ask you to identify Africa's primary geographical features; and a modern political map quiz (on Thursday, 19 March) will require you to place important cities and country names on a blank map. I will distribute maps with all the information you'll need to know at the beginning of the semester.

## Marking scheme

Marks will be determined as follows:

Attendance and Participation (inc. informal writing)	20%
Primary document essay	10%
Midterm short answer exam	5%
Midterm essay	15%
Thematic essay	15%
Final short answer exam	5%
Final essay	20%
Map quizzes	10%

**Note:** *Papers submitted late will be penalized one-third of a grade per calendar day without prior approval of the instructor. Talk with the instructor in advance if you think you may need extra time with a particular assignment.*

## Academic Integrity Policy

This course follows the academic integrity guidelines set forth by the College of LSA [<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity/>] and the History Department [<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/history/undergraduate/courses/guidelinesandpolicies>]. Students should familiarize themselves with both of these documents, which explain the standards of academic integrity and clarify the prohibited forms of academic misconduct. Students in this course should utilize the Chicago Manual of Style Online for all issues of source citation, along with any specific guidelines provided in the course assignments. Clarifying the disciplinary standards of research ethics and source citation is part of the educational mission of this course, and students should consult the instructor regarding any questions. Any cases of academic misconduct in this class will automatically earn a zero for the assignment (and may incur further penalties). All cases of deliberate academic misconduct that result in formal sanctions of any kind will be reported to the dean's office, as required by LSA policy, which also ensures due process rights of appeal for students.

## Grading criteria:

Grading papers is not an exact business. We will not give or take off a fixed number of points for particular strengths or weaknesses. The following table, therefore, should be read as a guideline.

GRADE	ARGUMENT	EVDIENCE	STYLE	MECHANICS
A	Argument clearly stated at beginning and developed logically throughout the paper to a clear conclusion.	Extensive and varied evidence supports argument. No significant omissions, irrelevancies, or errors.	Excellent prose style; clear, elegant and persuasive.	No errors of grammar, spelling etc.

B	Argument generally clear, but some digressions or failures to develop fully to a conclusion.	Generally good evidence, but some lack of variety of sources or errors of omission, or some irrelevant data.	Clear and understandable prose, but less than elegant.	A few minor errors.
C	Argument is implied, but not explicitly states and/or not well developed to a conclusion.	Some evidence, but excessive dependence on a single source, substantial omissions or irrelevancies, and/or minor errors of fact.	Understandable writing, but sometimes vague, wooden, or choppy.	Substantial errors which detract from overall effect of the paper.
D	Argument is barely discernable and/or very poorly developed.	Very little or largely irrelevant evidence, and/or substantial errors of fact.	Writing is confusing, vague, and/or hard to understand.	Frequent and serious errors which make paper hard to understand.
F	No discernable argument or paper totally digresses from argument.	Virtually no relevant evidence and/or very serious errors of fact.	Writing is nearly unintelligible.	Massive errors which render paper nearly unintelligible.

## \*\* Schedule \*\*

### Week One: Setting the Scene

#### Reading:

Binyavanga Wainaina, 'How to Write about Africa,' *Granta* 92 (2005) \*\*

8 Jan.

Introductions

Screening: Chimamanda Adichie, 'The Danger of a Single Story,' available at

<<http://edition.cnn.com/2009/OPINION/12/21/ted.talk.adichie.excerpt/index.html>>

*Note that discussion sections do not meet this week*

### Week Two: Abolitionism and Imperialism in Britain and Africa

#### Reading:

Trevor Getz and Liz Clarke, *Abina and the Important Men: A Graphic History* (Oxford, 2011)

13 Jan.

Lecture: Abolitionism and Imperialism

Screening: 'Kingdom of Asante' (BBC, 2014)

15 Jan. Discussion Sections  
Discuss the week's reading

15 Jan.  
Discussion: Slavery and Freedom in 19<sup>th</sup> century West Africa (bring the readings to class)

### **Week Three: Partitioning Africa**

#### Reading:

#### *Analysis*

Paul Landau, 'When Rain Falls: Rainmaking and Community in a Tswana Village, c. 1870 to Recent Times,' *Int. Jo. Afri. Hist. Studies* 26 (1) (1993), 1-30 \*\*

Paul Landau, 'Explaining Surgical Evangelism in Colonial Southern Africa: Teeth, Pain and Faith,' *Journal of African History* 37 (2) (1996), 261-281 \*\*

#### *Primary Sources*

David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in Southern Africa* (1857), 19-25 \*\*

20 Jan.  
Lecture: The Politics of Environmental Control in East and Southern Africa  
Screening: 'The Bible and the Gun'

22 Jan. Discussion Sections  
Discuss the week's reading

22 Jan.  
Discussion: Rainmaking, community, and colonialism (bring readings to class)  
In class: **Map Quiz I**

### **Week Four: Christianity and Ethnicity**

#### Reading:

#### *Analysis*

John Lonsdale, "'Listen While I Read": Patriotic Christianity among the Young Kikuyu', in Toyin Falola (ed.), *Christianity and Social Change in Africa* (Carolina Academic Press, 2005), 563-93 \*\*

#### *Primary Source*

Excerpts from *Mwigwithania* \*\*

27 Jan.  
Lecture: Christianity and Ethnicity in Africa

29 Jan. Discussion Sections  
Discuss the week's reading

29 Jan.  
Discussion: Thinking through *Mwigwithania* (bring readings to class)

### **Week Five: South Africa: Liberalism and Racism**

#### Reading:

##### *Primary Sources*

Sol Plaatje, *Mhudi* (Waveland, 2013)

Sol Plaatje, excerpts from *Native Life in South Africa* (1913) \*\*

3 Feb.  
Lecture: Liberalism and Racism in South Africa  
Screening: 'South Africa: White Laager' (1977)  
**Due:** Primary document essay

5 Feb. Discussion Sections  
Discuss the week's reading

5 Feb.  
Screening: 'Solomon Plaatje: A Man for our Time' (2001)  
Discussion: Plaatje's political fiction (bring readings to class)

### **Week Six: Nationalism and Political Thought in West Africa**

#### Reading:

##### *Analysis*

P. Zachernuk, 'Nationalism and the Future', in *Colonial Subjects* (Virginia, 2000), 125-174 \*\*

##### *Primary Source*

Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (1994, but first published in 1958)

10 Feb.  
Lecture: Nationalism and Political Thought in West Africa

12 Feb. Discussion Sections  
Discuss the week's reading

12 Feb.  
Screening: 'Chinua Achebe' (1988)  
Discussion: on the provenance of *Things Fall Apart* (bring readings to class)

## **Week Seven: South Africa: Apartheid and Urban Life**

### Reading:

#### *Analysis*

Clive Glaser, 'Managing the Sexuality of Urban Youth: Johannesburg, 1920s-1960s,' *Int. Jo. Afri. Hist. Studies* 38 (2) (2005), 301-327 \*\*

#### *Primary Source*

Modikwe Dikobe, *Marabi Dance* (Heinemann, 1984) \*\*

17 Feb.

Lecture: Urban South Africa in the 20<sup>th</sup> century

19 Feb. Discussion Sections

Discuss the week's reading

19 Feb.

Screening: 'Have You Seen *Drum* Lately?' (2003)

Discussion: *Marabi Dance* and South African urbanism (bring reading to class)

## **Week Eight: Midterm**

### Reading:

None

24 Feb.

Review for midterm exam

26 Feb. Discussion Sections

No meeting

26 Feb.

In class: Midterm Exam

**Due:** Midterm essay

## **Week Nine: Spring Break**

Class does not meet

## **Week Ten: Kenya's Nationalism?**

### Reading:

*Primary Sources*

Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *A Grain of Wheat* (Penguin, 2002 [1967])  
 'Kenya African Union Meeting at Nyeri', 26<sup>th</sup> July, 1952, in F.D. Corfield, *Origins and Growth of Mau Mau* (Government Printer, 1952) \*\*

10 March

Lecture: Mau Mau in Colonial Kenya  
 Screening: 'Kenya: White Terror' (2005)

12 March Discussion Sections

Discuss the week's reading

12 March

Discussion: on the memory of Mau Mau (bring readings to class)

### **Week Eleven: Independence reconsidered, in East Africa**

#### Reading:

##### *Primary Sources*

Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Matigari* (Heinemann, 1989) \*\*

Oginga A. Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru* (Hill and Wang, 1969), excerpts \*\*

17 March

Lecture: Post-colonial Africa

19 March Discussion Sections

Discuss the week's reading

19 March

Screening: 'Who's Afraid of Ngugi?' (2006)

Discussion: Revolutionary politics in Kenya? (bring book to class)

In class: **Map Quiz II**

### **Week Twelve: Independence reconsidered, in West Africa**

#### Reading:

##### *Primary Sources*

Chinua Achebe, *Anthills of the Savannah* (Oxford, 1997 [1987])

J.C. Anorue, 'How to Become Rich and Avoid Poverty' (1962) \*\*

24 March

Lecture: Nigeria in History and the Imagination

Screening: 'Welcome to Lagos' (2010)

26 March Discussion Sections  
Discuss the week's reading

26 March  
Discussion: on post-colonial Nigeria (bring readings to class)

### **Week Thirteen: Understanding Idi Amin**

#### Reading:

##### *Analysis*

Mark Leopold, 'Sex, violence and history in the lives of Idi Amin: Postcolonial masculinity as masquerade,' *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* 45 (2009), 321-330 \*\*

Alicia Decker, 'A Gendered History of Disappearance in Idi Amin's Uganda,' *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 7 (1) (2013), 125-42 \*\*

##### *Primary Sources*

Excerpts from the *Voice of Uganda* \*\*

Christopher Ssebadduka, 'Maly ya Nyoko' \*\*

31 March  
Lecture: The Rhetoric and Practice of Government in Amin's Uganda  
Screening: 'General Idi Amin Dada' (1974)

2 April Discussion Sections  
Discuss the week's reading

2 April  
Discussion: on Idi Amin's Uganda (bring readings to class)  
**Due:** Thematic essay

### **Week Fourteen: Women's Rights in Colonial and Contemporary Africa**

#### Reading:

##### *Analysis*

Matthew Carotenuto, 'Repatriation in Colonial Kenya: African Institutions and Gender Violence,' *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 45 (1) (2012), 9-28 \*\*

David Cohen and Atieno Odhiambo, *Burying S.M.*, entire book

##### *Primary Source*

Wambui Otieno, *Mau Mau's Daughter* (Lynne Rienner, 1998), Chs. 3, 5, 6 & 8 \*\*

Paul Mboya, 'The Luo, Their Customs and Beliefs' (1938), Preface, Chs. 2, 10, and 12 \*\*

7 April  
Lecture: Gender, Custom and Inequality in Colonial Africa

9 April Discussion Sections  
 Discuss readings and prepare for mock trial

9 April  
 Screening: 'The Day I Will Never Forget' (2002)  
 Discussion: Women's rights? (bring readings to class)

**Week Fifteen: Burying S.M.**

Reading:  
 None

14 April  
 Lecture: Understanding the S.M. Otieno case

16 April Discussion Sections  
 Prepare for the mock trial

16 April  
 The S.M. Otieno case recreated!

**Week Sixteen**

Reading:  
 None

21 April  
 Review for final exam

***Final exam: Thursday, 28 April at 1:30 pm in our classroom.***