

**AS100.399**  
**Decolonization and Nationalism in Africa**  
**Final Syllabus, Spring 2010**

**Professor**

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**Class Meeting Times**

Tuesdays 3-5:30 in Dunning Hall 311

**Scope and Purpose**

This course is a *critical* reading seminar on decolonization and nationalism in Africa. Africa means the African continent. To be critical is not only to *criticize*, but to *dissect* and *analyze*. Decolonization broadly designates the ending of colonial rule, of colonial political status.

Nationalism is not a synonym for decolonization. Neither is independence. It is possible to decolonize without independence, for example. Such cases include places like Réunion, Mayotte, Guadeloupe and Martinique—once French colonies, but now French *départements*, administratively part of France and theoretically on equal terms with Paris. And not all anti-colonial activity is nationalist: labor actions such as railway strikes, for example, which intend to do away with discriminatory and racist colonial labor policies are not necessarily nationalist in orientation for their aim may not be to create a nation. Nationalism, therefore, was not the only or inevitable end to colonization. It was a choice, one patterned by international norms of the post-WWII world and by the ideas and desires of anticolonial activists.

Nationalism is a particular mode of decolonization in which an independent nation-state is created out of a territorial colony. Nationalism is also a mode of thinking, an intellectual project. That project imagines what the nation or the “postcolony” (by implication, a state without a nation) will look like, and what sacrifices will need to be made for it, and by whom. Conversely, nationalist projects are conceived to create or benefit the nation (or certain segments of it), whether willfully or not. Who will or actually does benefit from nationalism and nationalist projects? Who must make sacrifices? Who is included in the new nation? Excluded? Why? How? Nationalism, in other words, is an ideology which when set in practice has deep practical consequences. All nationalisms are not the same.

Decolonization, nationalism, and independence, while each different one from the other, are closely linked in practice. If we conceive of them through the metaphor of circles, they intersect with each other. Nationalism and decolonization each bear with them certain connotations in academic study. African nationalism, which retains a good deal of (vaguely defined) popularity among the US public, emphasizes the positive activities of Africans to throw off colonialism and to create a forward-looking nation. Studies of African nationalism tend to focus on African intellectuals and organizers. Many undergraduates coming into a course on modern Africa are seeking celebratory narratives nationalism, as if nationalism—rather than, say, independence—were necessarily worthy of praise. Decolonization emphasizes, by contrast, the actions of European rulers of empire to divest themselves of colonies, to end imperial rule, even in the absence of nationalist activities on the part of Africans. Decolonization suggests that Europeans were as involved in the process of ending colonialism as were Africans. In this course, we will emphasize both decolonization and nationalism in dynamic interaction.

To examine the processes of decolonization and nationalism *critically* is not to take them at face value. It is to interrogate them. It is to ask how national and decolonizing projects differed and to examine their various implications. In the early years of African independence, there was little critical examination of African nationalism (Frantz Fanon was a very notable, and astute, example). In the late colonial and immediate postcolonial era, scholars largely celebrated nationalism and decolonization. Some still do, but such celebratory scholarship is rarely taken seriously these days. Decolonization and nationalism have now become major topics of critical inquiry. At least among scholars, and writers (of both fiction and nonfiction), and thinkers of various sorts, celebratory studies of African nationalism no longer enjoy pride of place. In large part this is because decolonization and nationalism have fallen short of expectations. And in part it is because of the exclusion and the violence frequently justified by nationalist ideologies everywhere in the world, not just in Africa.

A fundamental assumption of this course is that Africa is a modern, cosmopolitan, and diverse place. Human genome studies demonstrate that the greatest human diversity of any continent is found in Africa. Linguistic studies show the same about language: Africans speak more languages than do people on any other continent. African cultures and societies are similarly diverse, and this is true within modern African countries. African unity—whether cultural or political—is more a function about how people think rather than a matter of comparative history. And like all modern continents, Africa has a history of in- and out-migrations, some voluntary, some coerced. There are indigenous Africans of many origins and phenotypes. And there are immigrants from all around the world: Euro-Africans of various stripes (black and white), Asian-

Africans (Indians, Chinese, and Indonesians especially), Arab-Africans of various sorts, Mediterranean-Africans (especially Lebanese), American-Africans, Jewish Africans of various origins and more. Because of its diversity in both “native” and immigrant populations, and in their many occupations, Africa is a cosmopolitan place in a way few students in North America typically understand. For this reason, nationalism is especially problematic in African history because of its propensity to draw boundaries restrictively and to exclude differing communities. How does nationalism deal with diversity in a diverse place? What is the relationship of African nationalism to race in a place that is racially diverse? What does race mean in a continent of such human and cultural diversity? Africa’s diversity—something often obscured by the racialized definition of “African” in common circulation on the streets and in the classrooms of North America—and nationalism, then, must be studied reflexively.

### **Required Books and ISBNs (make sure you get the correct book!):**

- Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). **978-0521776004**
- Chinua Achebe, *A Man of the People* (New York: Anchor Books, 1988). **978-0385086165**
- Tony Chafer, *The End of Empire in French West Africa: France's Successful Decolonization?* (Oxford: Berg, 2002). **978-1859735572**
- Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008) **978-0801474545**
- Daniel Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya: Counterinsurgency, Civil War, and Decolonization* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 2009). **978-0521113823**
- Heather J. Sharkey, *Living with Colonialism: Nationalism and Culture in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003). **978-0520235595**

### **Requirements**

1. Attend every class. You must notify the professor *beforehand* if you are going to miss a class.
2. Informal weekly reaction/thought papers. These are informal (grammar, spelling, organization and the like are not checked) but they must be typed, not handwritten. One page, single spaced, is entirely adequate. You are *not* encouraged to write more. The paper should record your informal reaction to the week’s assigned reading, a sort of journal of your thoughts. Strive to answer questions such as: What was the argument of the assigned readings? What did you find interesting about them? New? Provocative? Questionable? Each paper

should also raise two or more issues for the class to deliberate, and you should raise these verbally during our discussion. The issues/questions should be thought-provoking ones for your fellow students to consider, not simple informational questions for the instructor to answer. The purpose of the weekly papers is for the instructor to get a sense of how you are thinking critically about the readings and to help you prepare for your oral participation each week. Weekly papers are due each week at the end of class. Ten points will be subtracted from your final grade for each reaction paper not turned in *on time*. You must turn in *your own* reaction paper and it is a violation of academic honesty to have another person turn it in for you or for you to turn in someone else's paper.

3. A map quiz of modern African country names. This will be administered in class on February 9. You will find the map and a list of the countries you are expected to identify at the course web site.

4. A critical review of the required reading for one week of the course: 7 full pages, typed, double spaced, Times New Roman 12 pt, one inch margins. Due in class on the week *after* the assigned reading (this allows you the benefit of the course discussion of the readings). The review should first *describe* the argument/plot of the readings and how they relate to decolonization and nationalism. Then the review should critically *analyze* the works from your perspective. What are the implications of the arguments? How do the ideas in the works relate to other readings you have conducted for the class? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the argument/plot?

5. Review of a book listed under "Additional Readings": 5 full pages, typed, double spaced, Times New Roman 12 pt, one inch margins. Due in class on April 13 and electronically to Turnitin before class. The review should first *describe* the argument/plot of the book and how it relates to decolonization and nationalism. Then the review should critically *analyze* the book from your perspective. What are the implications of the argument? How do the ideas in the book relate to other readings you have conducted for the class? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the argument/plot?

6. A take-home final examination. This will consist of two 5-page essay answers to two general questions relating to the required readings and course discussions. Ten pages total. Exam questions will be distributed as hard copy at the end of class on April 27 and essays are due by attachment to email by noon on Friday, May 7. *The conception and writing of these answers must be entirely your own; working with another person on the exam in any way will be interpreted as academic dishonesty and reported.*

## Schedule

### Week One (Jan 26): Preliminaries

### Week Two (Feb 2): Background

- Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 1-132.
- John Springhall, *Decolonization since 1945: The Collapse of European Overseas Empires* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 1-17 & 203-219.

#### Additional Reading:

- John Springhall, *Decolonization since 1945: The Collapse of European Overseas Empires*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001.
- Raymond F. Betts, *Decolonization*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2004.
- David Birmingham, *The Decolonization of Africa*. Athens, Oh.: Ohio University Press, 1995.

### Week Three (Feb 9): Dreams: Pan-Africanism, Présence Africaine & Nationalist Historiography

- *Remember: Map quiz of African countries to be administered in class*
- Benetta Jules-Rosette, *Black Paris: The African Writers' Landscape* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), pp. 19-83.
- Toyin Falola, *Nationalism and African Intellectuals* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2001), pp. 143-178 & 223-260.

#### Additional Reading:

- Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003.
- Toyin Falola, *Nationalism and African Intellectuals*. Rochester, N.Y.: University of Rochester Press, 2001.

### Week Four (Feb 16): Colonialism & National Genesis in the British Sudan

- Heather J. Sharkey, *Living with Colonialism: Nationalism and Culture in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

#### Additional Reading:

- Robert L. Tignor, *Capitalism and Nationalism at the End of Empire: State and Business in Decolonizing Egypt, Nigeria, and Kenya, 1945-1963*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.
- Taleb Salih, *Season of Migration to the North*. New York: NYRB Classics, 2009. [A Novel]

### **Week Five (Feb 23): Decolonization in French West Africa**

- Tony Chafer, *The End of Empire in French West Africa: France's Successful Decolonization?* (Oxford: Berg, 2002).

#### Additional Reading:

- Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa*. Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Jean Marie Allman, *The Quills of the Porcupine: Asante Nationalism in an Emergent Ghana*. Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993.
- Charles Robert Ageron, *La décolonisation française*. 2. éd. rev. et augm. Paris: Armand Colin, 1994.
- Richard Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs: The Politics of Chieftaincy in Ghana, 1951-1960*. Athens, Oh.: Ohio University Press, 1999.

### **Week Six (Mar 2): Critical Appraisals of the Postcolony**

- Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, pp. 156-204.
- Frantz Fanon, selection from "The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness," in Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* trans. by Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004), pp. 97-126.
- Achille Mbembe, "Provisional Notes on the Postcolony," *Africa* 62,1 (1992): 3-37.
- Jean-François Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*. 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Eng.: Polity Press, 2009), 228-259.

#### Additional Reading:

- Jean-François Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*. New York: Longman, 1993.
- Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.
- Jean-François Bayart, Stephen Ellis, and Béatrice Hibou. *The Criminalization of the State in Africa*. Oxford, Eng.: James Currey, 1999.
- Ahmadou Kourouma, *Waiting for the Wild Beasts to Vote*. New York: Vintage, 2004. [A Novel].
- Chinua Achebe, *Anthills of the Savannah*. New York: Anchor Books, 1997. [A Novel]
- Sony Labou Tansi, *The Antipeople: A Novel*. New York: Marion Boyars, 2000. [A Novel]

### **Week Seven (Mar 9): The Accomplishments of Loyalism in Kenya**

- Daniel Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya: Counterinsurgency, Civil War, and Decolonization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Additional Reading:

- David M. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2005.
- Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya*. New York: Henry Holt, 2005.
- M. G. Vassanji, *The In-Between World of Vikram Lall: A Novel*. New York: Vintage, 2003. [A Novel]
- Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *A Grain of Wheat*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 2008. [A Novel]

**Week Eight (Mar 23): The Invention of Decolonization in Algeria**

- Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).

Additional Reading:

- Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria, 1954-1962*. New York: Penguin Books, 1987.
- Martin Alexander, Martin Evans, and John F. Keiger, eds. *The Algerian War and the French Army, 1954-62: Experiences, Images, Testimonies*. Basingstoke, Eng.: Palgrave, 2002.
- Luis Martinez, *The Algerian Civil War, 1990-1998*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.
- Assia Djebar, *The Tongue's Blood Does Not Run Dry: Algerian Stories*. Seven Stories Press, 2006. [Fiction]
- Assia Djebar, *Children of the New World: A Novel of the Algerian War*. New York: The Feminist Press at CUNY, 2005. [A Novel]

**Week Nine (Mar 30): The Imperatives of Genocide**

- Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 103-233 (chapters 4-7).
- Jonathon Glassman, "Slower than a Massacre: The Multiple Sources of Racial Thought in Colonial Africa," *American Historical Review* 109,3 (2004), 720-754.

Additional Reading:

- Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996.
- Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide*. London: Hurst & Co., 1998.
- Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001.

- Gérard Prunier, *Darfur: A 21st Century Genocide*. 3rd ed. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2008.

### **Week Ten (Apr 6): Nation and People in East Africa**

- Andrew Coulson, *Tanzania: A Political Economy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 176-183 & 235-271.
- Derek R. Peterson, "States of Mind: Political History and the Rwenzururu Kingdom in Western Uganda" in *Recasting the Past: History Writing and Political Work in Modern Africa*, edited by Derek R. Peterson and Giacomo Macola (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009), pp. 171-190.
- Lynn M. Thomas, *Politics of the Womb: Women, Reproduction, and the State in Kenya* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), pp. 135-171.
- Harry G. West, *Kupilikula: Governance and the Invisible Realm in Mozambique* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), pp. 143-189.

#### Additional Reading:

- Susan Geiger, *TANU Women: Gender and Culture in the Making of Tanganyikan Nationalism, 1955-1965* (Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 1997).
- Kelly Michelle Askew, *Performing the Nation: Swahili Music and Cultural Politics in Tanzania* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), selection.
- Cati Coe, *Dilemmas of Culture in African Schools: Youth, Nationalism, and the Transformation of Knowledge*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- Kristen E. Cheney, *Pillars of the Nation: Child Citizens and Ugandan National Development*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

### **Week Eleven (Apr 13): ZANU-PF forms of Nationalism in Zimbabwe**

- Terence O. Ranger, "Nationalist Historiography, Patriotic History and the History of the Nation: The Struggle over the Past in Zimbabwe." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 30,2 (June 2004), 215-234.
- Brian Raftopoulos, "Problematising Nationalism in Zimbabwe: A Historiographical Review," *Zambezia* 26,2 (1999), 115-134.
- Brian Raftopoulos and Alois S. Mlambo, eds. *Becoming Zimbabwe: A History from the Pre-Colonial Period to 2008* (Harare: Weaver Press, 2009), 167-232.

#### Additional Reading:

- Norma J. Kriger, *Guerrilla Veterans in Post-war Zimbabwe: Symbolic and Violent Politics, 1980-1987* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

- Norma J. Kriger, *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War: Peasant Voices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
- Thembisa Waetjen, *Workers and Warriors: Masculinity and the Struggle for Nation in South Africa*. Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 2004.
- Marissa J. Moorman, *Intonations: A Social History of Music and Nation in Luanda, Angola, from 1945 to Recent Times*. Athens, Oh.: Ohio University Press, 2008.

### **Week Twelve (Apr 20): Contrasting Interpretations of Guinean Nationalism**

- Frederick Cooper, "The Dialectics of Decolonization: Nationalism and Labor Movements in Post-War French Africa," in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, edited by Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 406-435.
- Elizabeth Schmidt, "Top Down or Bottom Up? Nationalism Mobilization Reconsidered, with Special Reference to Guinea (French West Africa)," *American Historical Review* 110,4 (2005), 975-1014.
- Jay Straker, *Youth, Nationalism, and the Guinean Revolution* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), pp. 107-132 & 176-214.

#### Additional Reading:

- Elizabeth Schmidt, *Mobilizing the Masses: Gender, Ethnicity, and Class in the Nationalist Movement in Guinea, 1939-1958* (Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 2005).
- Elizabeth Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea, 1946-1958*. Athens, Oh.: Ohio University Press, 2007.
- Richard Joseph, *Radical Nationalism in Cameroun: Social Origins of the UPC Rebellion*. Oxford, Eng.: Oxford University Press, 1977.

### **Week Thirteen (Apr 27): Fiction of the Postcolony**

- Chinua Achebe, *A Man of the People* (New York: Anchor Books, 1988).

#### Additional Reading:

- Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 1988.
- Chinua Achebe, *No Longer at Ease*. New York: Anchor Books, 1994.
- Abdulrazak Gurnah, *Admiring Silence*. New York: New Press, 1996.
- Assia Djebar, *So Vast the Prison: Seven Stories* Press, 1999.
- Helon Habila, *Waiting for an Angel*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2004.
- Mia Couto, *Sleepwalking Land*. London: Serpent's Tail, 2006.
- Tahar Ben Jelloun, *The Last Friend: A Novel*. New Penguin, 2007.
- Naguib Mahfouz, *Karnak Cafe*. Cairo: American University Cairo, 2007.
- Hisham Matar, *In the Country of Men*. New York: Dial Press, Random House, 2008.