**HIST 641:02 Readings in Colonial Sub-Saharan Africa**

**Purdue University**

**University Hall 319**

**2017 Spring Semester**

**T- 3:30-6:20 pm**

Instructor: Dr. Gallon  
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Office Hours: TTH, 2:30 -3:30 p.m. & by appointment

**Course Description:**

This is a course on the colonial histories of sub-Saharan African nations, their struggles for freedom and immediate post-colonial societies.

Various themes, such as European imperialism and racism; colonial systems of forced labor and wage labor; African resistance and collaboration; the Christianizing and westernizing effects of colonial education; and the transformation of African gender, class, and ethnic identities will be analyzed and studied. The following questions will guide our inquiry:

In this class we will study debates in the historiography of Africa including the question of the significance of colonial rule within the longer history of Africa and debates around the politics and writing of African history. We will also allocate class assignments.

**Required Texts:**

A. Adu Boahen.  *African Perspectives on Colonialism*

William Cunningham Bissel *Urban Design, Chaos and Colonial Power in Zanzibar*

Catherine M. Cole *Ghana’s Concert Party Theater*

Karen E. Flint *Healing Traditions: African Medicine, Cultural Exchange and Competition in South Africa, 1820-1948*

Jonathon Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones: Racial Thought and Violence in Colonial Zanzibar*

Adam Hochschild *King Leopold’s Ghost*

Henrietta Moore and Megan Vaughan. *Cutting down Trees: Gender, Nutrition, and Agricultural Change in the Northern Province of Zambia, 1890-1990*

Taiwo, Olufemi  *How Colonialism Preempted Modernity in Africa*

John Edward Phillips, *Writing African History*

Carina E. Ray *Crossing the Color Line: Race, Sex and the Contested Politics of Colonialism in Ghana*

Walter Rodney *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*

Luise White S*peaking With Vampires: Rumor and History in Colonial Africa*

**Optional Background Readings**

Robert O. Collins *Historical Problems of Imperial Africa*

J. Parker and R. Rathbone. *African History: A Short Introduction*

R.J. Reid, *A Modern History of Africa: 1800 to present*

J. Iliffe, *Africans: the history of a continent*

**Course Requirements:**

1. Each student will be responsible for leading two class discussions. You will prepare a short (3-4 pages) critical analysis paper for each discussion. The paper should critically review the reading for the class you have been assigned. (20%)
2. Each student will be expected to a write a longer historiographical paper (20 pages) on a topic of his or her choice. Topics to be discussed with me in advance of the due date. (40%)
3. Each student will post a question about the weekly reading to Blackboard by Tuesday at 12 pm (10%)
4. Each student will actively and verbally participate in all classes (10%)

**Schedule**

1/10 – **Introduction to Course and Organization**

**African Historiography**

In this class we will study debates in the historiography of Africa

including the question of the significance of colonial rule within the

longer history of Africa and debates around the politics and writing of

African history

**Reading:** John Edward Phillips, “What is African History” in *Writing African History”*

**Reading:** E.S. Atieno-Odhiambo, “From African Historiographies to an African Philosophy of History in *Africanizing Knowledge*

**Reading:** Frederick Cooper “Conflict and Connection: Rethinking African Colonial History” *American Historical Review*, 99 (1994) 1516-1545.

**Reading:** ­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ “Africa’s past and Africa’s Historians.” *Canadian Journal of African Studies,* 34 (2000), 298-336.

**Reading:** J. Miller. “History and Africa/Africa and History”in *American Historical Review* 104 (1999), 1-32.

**Reading:** Iris Berger. ‘African Women’s History: Themes and Perspectives’ in *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History,* 4,1 (Spring 2003)

**Reading:** Reading: Derek Peterson and Giacomo Macola "Homespun Historiography and the Academic Profession" in *Recasting the Past*

1/17 **– Sources**

In this class we query the sources that historians of Africa use to write the history of the continent. We will also examine the constitution of the colonial archive and uses of oral history in the writing of colonial African history.

**Reading:** David Henige “Oral Tradition as a Means of Reconstructing the Past.” in *Writing African History*

**Reading:** Barbara M. Cooper “Oral Sources and the Challenge of African History.” In *Writing African History*

**Reading:** John Thornton, “European Documents and African History” in *Writing African History*

**Reading:**  Kathleen Sheldon “Writing About Women: Approaches to a Gendered Perspective in African History.” in *Writing African History*

1/24 – **Colonialism**

Colonialism: In this class we’ll examine theories of colonialism, and critiques of uses of the idea of the ‘colonial’. We will then begin to think about the relationship between theory and practice.

**Reading:** A. Adu Boahen *African Perspectives on Colonialism*

**Reading:** Frederick Cooper *Colonialism in Question* “Introduction”: 3-33

1/31 – **Colonial Capitalism**

Colonial capitalism in Africa was a complex and contradictory force. Colonial regimes needed to extract a surplus from their subjects, but often imagined they could do so without capitalism’s socially disruptive consequences. In this class we’ll examine the social and economic consequences of the colonial economy.

**Reading:** Walter Rodney *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*.

2/7 - **Colonial Modernity**

In this class we will examine the concept of modernity and its relationship to development.

**Reading:** Taiwo, Olufemi. *How Colonialism Preempted Modernity in Africa.*

**Reading:** Frederick Cooper, “Modernity” in *Colonialism in Question*

2/14 **– Tradition, Modernity and Creative Expression in Colonialism**

In this class we will examine the relationship between modernity and tradition in context of performance.

**Reading:** Catherine Cole *Concert Party Theater*

2/21 **- Colonial Rule: The New Political Order**

In this class we will examine the political strategies of colonial rulers in Africa from the late nineteenth century ‘Scramble’ to the Second World War. We’ll compare British Indirect Rule policies with French ideologies of ‘assimilation’, and then look at the relationship between theory and practice. How far was violence, of the threat of violence, inherent to all forms of colonial rule in Africa?

**Reading:** Adam Hochschild *King Leopold’s Ghost*

2/28 – **Colonial States in Practice: Law and Custom**

In this class we will examine the use of the law as critical to colonial regimes of governance in Africa and the extent to which colonial rulers ‘reinvented’ custom and ‘tradition’ through legal cultures.

**Reading:** William Cunningham Bissel *Urban Design, Chaos and Colonial Power in Zanzibar*

3/7 – **Colonialism: Laborers and Migrants**

In this class we will examine the social and economic consequences of agricultural change and labor migration.

Henrietta Moore and Megan Vaughan. *Cutting down Trees: Gender, Nutrition, and Agricultural Change in the Northern Province of Zambia, 1890-1990*

3/14 - **Settler States: Medicine, Race and Class**

In this class, we will examine the particular dynamics of African settler states, their political economies and ideologies of race and class.

**Reading:** Karen E. Flint *Healing Traditions: African Medicine, Cultural Exchange and Competition in South Africa, 1820-1948*

3/21 – **Spring Break**

3/28 –**Colonial “Intermediaries” and Literacy**

In this class we examine the dependency of colonial states on local intermediaries.

**Reading:** Benjamin N. Lawrence, Emily Lynn Osborne and Richard L. Roberts, “Introduction” in *Intermediaries, Interpreters and Clerks*

**Reading:** “An Interpreter Will Arise” in *Intermediaries, Interpreters and Clerks*

**Reading:** “Introduction” in *Africa’s Hidden Histories*

**Reading:**  “Reasons for Writing” in *Africa’s Hidden Histories*

**Reading:** “The Bantu *World and the World of the Book”* in *Africa’s Hidden Histories*

**Reading:** The Present Battle is the Brain Battle” in *Africa’s Hidden Histories*

4/3 – **Religious Change in the Colonial Context**

In this class we examine the impact of traditional African religion, Christianity and Islam on African societies in the colonial period.

**Reading:** Luise White S*peaking With Vampires: Rumor and History in Colonial Africa*

**Reading:** Toyin Falola, selections from *Christianity and Social Change*

**Reading:** Nathaniel Matthew. “Imagining Arab Communities: Colonialism, Islamic Reform and Arab Identity in Mombasa, Kenya, 1897-1933” in *Islamic Africa*

4/10 - **Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Project**

In this class we focus on the nature of African gender relations and the sexualities of colonial subjects.

**Reading:** Marc Epprecht. “Sexuality Africa, History (AHR Forum) *American Historical Review* 114 (2009), 1258-1272

**Reading:** Carine E. Ray*Crossing the Color Line: Race, Sex and the Contested Politics of Colonialism in Ghana*

4/17 **Post-War Developmental State**

In this class we discuss nationalism, decolonization and the end of empire in Africa

**Reading:** Jonathon Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones: Racial Thought and Violence in Colonial Zanzibar,* part I

4/24 **Ends of Empire**

Again, in this class we discuss nationalism, decolonization and the end of empire in Africa

**Reading:** Jonathon Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones: Racial Thought and Violence in Colonial Zanzibar,* part II