

HISTORY 3423X1: Race and Class in 20th Century Africa
Fall 2012

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BAC 404

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Office Hours: T & Th 11:30-1:30

Course Objectives:

Racial ideas defined European policies in Africa during the colonial era. However, modern social and economic change created new social and political groups that defied the colonial stereotypes. This course will trace this process of change in Africa and seek an understanding of its cultural and political consequences.

The course will introduce students to one classic African text on colonialism and nationalism: Albert Memmi's *The Colonizer and the Colonized*. This and other readings are designed for students to develop case studies on, 1) French North Africa, 2) South Africa, and, 3) Central Africa.

Readings:

Philip Gourevitch, *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families*, Picador, 1998.

Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, Little Brown, 1994.

Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, Beacon Press, 1991.

Evaluation:

Final Exam: 30%

Attendance: 10%

Response Papers: 15%

Presentation and Discussion: 15%

Research Paper 30%

Final Exam:

There will be a final exam. It will consist of essay questions and will be designed to test your knowledge of the issues of race and class in modern African history. In particular you will be responsible for a comparative understanding of political history in the colonial and national periods. Lectures will provide the students with an overview of African history in the 20th century. There are also reference works in the library: *The Cambridge History of Africa*, *UNESCO General History of Africa*, and *The Encyclopedia of African History*.

Attendance, Response Paper, Presentation and Discussion:

One of the main goals of the 3000 level history class is for each of you to engage with the readings in discussions each week. Participation is thus an important part of your grade. **Attendance** is mandatory.

Students will write six short **response papers** (500 words) on the readings we discuss together in class. Response papers should focus on class themes (race and class) as revealed in the text.

Also students will make one **presentation** to the class sharing their research and conclusions. The presentations will be made in groups of students studying related topics. Students will coordinate their presentations and formulate questions for class **discussion**. Some of these questions will appear on the final exam.

Discussion grades will be based upon attendance and participation in class activities.

Research Paper (3,000 words Due November 20)

The paper will be a study of politics in South Africa, Central Africa, or North Africa. You may also do a comparative study of racial or class politics in two or more of these regions. The paper will include a bibliography with at least 5 sources (articles or books) in addition to at least one of the required texts. Encyclopedia-type entries (either books or internet sources) may be included, but will not count as one of your sources. You may of course use books, articles or other documentary sources on the internet.

The **Course Outline** is numbered according to the weeks of the term. The readings should be completed beforehand in preparation for discussions, assignments or tests.

1. Introduction.

2. Race and Class.

3. Colonialism in North Africa

- Read “The Colonizer” in Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*.

4. Colonialism in South Africa.

- Read pages 1-140 in Mandela’s *Long Walk to Freedom*.

5. Colonialism in Central Africa.

- Read pages 5-62 in Gourevitch’s *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families*.

6. Nationalism in North Africa.

- Read “The Colonized” in Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*

7. Film, *Battle of Algiers*.

8. Nationalism in South Africa.

- Read pages 141-195 & 265-307 & 451-510 in Mandela’s *Long Walk to Freedom*.

9. Film, *Cry Freedom*.

10. Nationalism in Central Africa.

- Read pages 274-353 Gourevitch’s *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed*

11. Film, *Hotel Rwanda*.

12. Presentations. Papers due November 20

22th: South Africa:

13. Presentations.

27th: North Africa:

29th: Central Africa:

Questions on Albert Memmi’s *The Colonizer and the Colonized*

1. According to Memmi, is colonialism essentially a political, economic, or cultural system?
2. Who is the bourgeois colonized? What inhibits his identification with the bourgeois colonizer?
3. Describe how Memmi distinguishes between “a colonial, a colonizer, and the colonialist”.
4. What are the three discoveries that force the colonizer to accept his role as colonizer? Or, what is the economic, political, and moral scandal of colonialism?
5. Why is there no such thing as a colonial, only a colonizer?
6. What does Memmi mean by the “colonizer who refuses”? What difficulty does the colonizer who refuses encounter?
7. The colonizer who accepts faces the same ethical problem as the colonizer who refuses. How does he justify and legitimate his position as a colonialist?
8. Why does race trump class in Memmi’s appraisal of the colonizer who accepts?
9. Illustrate the meaning of the mythical portrait of the colonized. How does the colonized respond to this portrait?

10. According to Memmi, what impact did the war have upon the colonized? Give specific examples from the text.
11. Describe Memmi's analysis of the "conflict of generations" among the colonized.
12. Memmi speaks of the colonized finding refuge in social or cultural institutions. What are these institutions and what does he mean by refuge?
13. Memmi speaks of the colonized's alienation from his own culture. How did this alienation come about?
14. How will the colonized restore his cultural heritage? What are the most important cultural characteristics of this restoration or renewal?
15. Memmi creates an imaginary narrative between himself and a colonial listener. What is the content of that dialogue?
16. What are the two answers of the colonized to the colonial situation?
17. According to Memmi, why cannot the colonized identify with the "universal values common to all men"?
18. Memmi refers to Bourguiba, Messali Hadj, and Ferhat Abbas in his discussion of the conversion of the "sorcerer's apprentice". Relate the politics of these men to the theoretical discussion in Memmi.

Questions on Nelson Mandela's *Long Walk to Freedom*

1. Describe the structure of the Xhosa nation and its traditional political organization. To what degree had that structure persisted into the modern, 20th century period?
2. What options were opened to him by a higher education? What did his adopted father intend for him to do with his education? What did Mandela intend once he had an education?
3. What new political current was Mandela exposed to when he went away for school at Fort Hare? Describe life at the school.
4. Why did he run away to the city? Describe his impressions of the city. How did this change shape his professional and political future?
5. How did his view of Communism and Communists change over time? What was the most important factor that changed his view?
6. Describe his views on South African national politics before and after 1948.
7. Why was 1946 a turning point? How did his politics change after that year?
8. The tension between race and class is a recurrent theme in Mandela's autobiography. Why?
9. Identify the politics and attitudes of Smuts, Hertzog, and Malan, as described by Mandela. What was Mandela's attitude toward the white population generally?
10. The tension between race and class is a recurrent theme in Mandela's biography. Describe how these themes intersect in his narrative.

11. According to Mandela, 1946 was a turning point. Why?
12. Describe the platform of the National Party, as described by Mandela. What impact did its victory have upon Mandela?
13. What did Mandela learn from his travels to other parts of Africa and London?
14. Outline Mandela's defence at Rivonia. How did he justify his resort to violence?
15. How did Mandela keep the political struggle alive in prison? What challenges to his authority, or at least his relevance, did he confront? How were these overcome?

Questions on Philip Gourevitch's *We wish to inform you*

1. Gourevitch refers to Joseph Conrad's *The Heart of Darkness* in the opening pages. Why? What is the significance of Conrad's book to our understanding of the history of modern Central Africa?
2. The opening scene introduces a Rwandan of Twa (pygmy) descent looking for a European wife. What's the significance of this scene?
3. Who does Gourevitch seem to blame for bringing about the genocide of 1994?
4. Gourevitch argues that Hutu and Tutsi cannot be called distinct ethnic groups. Why not? What then is the meaning of the terms?
5. Gourevitch suggests that after the genocide historians and other social scientists have had to reconsider the political uses to which their writings have been put? How did history contribute to the genocide?
6. Lacger was a Belgian historian writing during the colonial period (see page 54). Why would Lacger want to underline Rwanda's national cohesion in his historical work?
7. What events occurred in the 1930s that changed the nature of Tutsi political power?
8. What was the content of the Hutu Manifesto of 1957? What prompted the emergence of this Hutu group?
9. Gourevitch claims that Logiest, a Belgian official, staged a Hutu *coup d'etat* in 1960. Why would the Belgians want to do this? Do you agree that the Belgians were the main factor behind the 1960 *coup d'etat* (also known as the Hutu Revolution)?
10. How, according to Gourevitch, was democracy transformed into a new form of tyranny after 1962?