

Spring 2012, WAG 214  
 GOV 365N (38805) (and AFR 30400)  
 TTH, 9.30-10:45

Professor Catherine Boone  
 Batts 3.128, office hours: T., 11-2  
 or by appointment  
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## **Politics in Contemporary Africa**

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**Prerequisites:** Six hours of lower-division Government

**Course Description:** This goal uses history, political science, geography and economics to answer questions about contemporary Africa: What are Africa's main political and economic challenges, and how have these changed over time (especially over the last 50 years or so? How do history, geography, ecology, politics, and global forces shape the fortunes of Africans and national trajectories? How are African countries similar and different from one another? What does the transition from the more closed political systems and economies of the 1960s to the more open and "globalized" economies and politics of the late 20th and 21st centuries portend for the continent? Who is in charge, and who are the likely winners and losers?

We use history, social science, films, the news, and grey literature (including the reports of international organizations and NGOs) to analyze politics in modern Africa.

**Objectives:** Students should gain an overview of the main currents of 20th century world history that have shaped the fate and fortunes of modern African countries, and of the causes and consequences of the variegated patterns of prosperity and poverty, and political stability and conflict, that characterize modern Africa. Basic concepts of comparative politics, the political economy of development, and international political economy will be introduced, explored, and applied in African contexts. Students should develop skills at reading, analyzing, and integrating material drawn from diverse academic sources and disciplines, and acquire an appreciation for how this work is produced and debated within the academic and policy worlds, as well as in international political fora such as the World Bank and the World Trade Organization. Basic tensions in North-South relations in global political and economic relations will come into focus, as will the causes of poverty, and the challenges and contradictions of democracy and democratization in unequal societies.

**Requirements:** Students need to attend all classes, do all assigned reading, view all films, and do all assignments. (Due dates listed below.) Class discussions of assigned readings are an important part of this course. Come to class prepared to ask questions about the readings, and offer reactions. Attendance will be taken into account in assignment of the participation grade.

**Map Quiz.** On Tues., Jan. 31, you will be asked to label countries and rivers on a blank political map of Africa (in-class assignment).

**Written in-class assignments.** During some class sessions, students will be asked to turn in questions, answers, or comments about films, readings, or lectures. We will do approx. 5 of these assignments over the course of the semester. These count toward your participation grade.

**Exams:** There will be three equally-weighted exams that will test your knowledge of readings, films, lectures, and class discussion. They will be given on T., Feb. 21, T., Apr. 3, and Th., May 10, from 2:00-3:15 pm.

Missed Class and Exam Policy. If you miss an exam or writing assignment due to illness, you will be given a make-up opportunity if you produce a doctor's note saying that you were too ill to be in class. If you need to miss class for a school interview, sporting event, or other professional or school-related commitment, make arrangements with the professor at least 14 days prior to the class you will miss. If you are out for a personal or family emergency, for an excused absence you should arrange to bring some documentation to the professor.

**Grading:** We will calculate your final grade as follows:

Map Quiz	5%
Participation, including in-class writing assignments:	20%
Exam #1	25%
#2	25%
#3	<u>25%</u>
Total	100%

**Texts:** These required books are available for purchase at the University Coop. They are also on reserve at PCL.

Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Richard Sandbrook, *Closing the Circle: Democratization and Development in Africa* (Toronto and London, Zed Books, 2000).

William G. Moseley and Leslie C. Gray, eds., *Hanging by a Thread: Cotton, Globalization, and Poverty in Africa* (Ohio. Univ. Press, 2008).

Course Packet. A packet of course readings has been prepared by Paradigm Books (407 W. 24th St., 472-7986). These readings are marked by an asterisk (\*) on the course outline.

Students with disabilities.<sup>1</sup>

Accommodations for religious holidays.<sup>2</sup>

Emergency Evacuation Policy.<sup>3</sup>

#### Course outline and readings

### **Part I. African Politics in the 20th Century: States born of Colonialism**

#### **Week 1: Introduction.**

Jan. 17, 19

This week we introduce two key analytic tools for understanding contemporary African political economies: a periodization, and geographic templates. What is the meaning of the titles of the Cooper and Joseph readings assigned for this week? What periodizations do these authors employ, and why?

Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, Ch. 1, "From colonies to Third World."

\*Richard Joseph, "Democracy and Reconfigured Power in Africa," *Current History*, November 2011.

\*Peter M. Lewis, "African Economies' *New Resilience*," *Current History*, May 2010

#### **Week 2: Creation of Modern African States: European Colonialism in Africa**

Jan. 24, 26

How and why did Europeans conquer so much of Africa from the 1870s to the 1910s? What was the nature of the colonial impact and colonial experience, which lasted until about 1960 for most of sub-Saharan Africa? How and why did it vary across space?

\*Walter Rodney, "How Europe Underdeveloped Africa," Bade Onimode, "Imperialism and Underdevelopment in Nigeria," and A. Adu Boahen, "The Colonial Impact," all in Robert O. Collins et al., eds., *Historical Problems in the Study of Africa* (Princeton: Markus Wiener, 1994, pp. 294-315).

### **Week 3: The Rocky Course of Colonial Rule**

Jan. 31, Feb. 2

In the 1930s and 1940s, the European colonial powers envisioned that they would rule Africa for another 200 years. Why did this plan not succeed? According to Cooper, why did the European colonizers fail to establish stable forms of rule in sub-Saharan Africa? Why did they fail to create self-sustaining colonial economies? (and how did they try to solve these problems along the way?)

#### Tues, Jan. 31: In-class MAP QUIZ

Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, "Ch. 2, "Workers, Peasants, and the Crisis of Colonialism," and Ch. 3, "Citizenship, Self-Government, and Development: The possibilities of the post-war moment," (pp. 20-65).

### **Week 4: Transitions to Political Independence**

Feb. 7, 9

What kinds of economy, and what kinds of government, did Africa inherit from the colonial period? What were social groupings and distinctions were politically-relevant? What caused the "late decolonizations of the 1970s and 1980s, and how did they differ from the decolonizations of the 1960s?

What were Africans "expectations of independence" and how did these stack up against the challenges of the era of transition from colonial rule to political independence? What was the institutional and political inheritance of the successor states?

Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, Ch. 4, Ch. 5, Ch. 6

\*J.F. Ade Ajayi, "Expectations of Independence," *Daedalus* 11/2 (1982): 1-9.

## **Part II. Challenges of Post-Independence**

### **Week 5. Challenges and Weaknesses of the New Successor States**

Feb. 14, 16

How did the projects of economic development and political consolidation become intertwined in the post-colonial period? What were the consequences for democracy and national integration? How did the leaders of African countries conceive of the respective roles of agriculture and industry in development? What is the point of Vansina's story about Mwasi and of his depiction of life in Kinshasha?

Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, Ch. 7, "The Recurrent Crises of the Gatekeeper State," pp. 156-190.

\*Jan Vansina, "Mwasi's Trials," *Daedalus* 11/2 (1982): 49-70.

\*Xinshen Diao, Peter Hazell, et al., *The Role of Agriculture in Development: Implications for Sub-Saharan Africa*, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), IFPRI Research Report 153, 2007.

**Week 6: Tues, Feb. 21. EXAM #1**

Feb. 21

**Part II: Africa Changes Tracks: Liberalizations in the 1980s and 1990s**

**Week 6. Crises and Reform in the 1980s and 1990s**

Feb. 23

Most African governments came under both domestic and international pressures to liberalize their economies and political systems in the 1990s. This resulted major reconfigurations of economic policy and political institutions. What international and domestic pressures explain the political and economic shifts of the 1980s and 1990s? What "patterns" does Sandbrook identify? What does Mkandawire mean by "choiceless democracies"? Why is Stein critical of the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programs?

**Week 7. Roll-Back: Pressures to Shrink the African State**

Feb. 28, Mar. 1

Sandbrook, *Closing the Circle*, Ch. 1, "Patterns and Perspectives," and Ch. 4, "Democracy and Market Reforms"

\*Thandika Mkandawire, "Crisis Management and the Making of "Choiceless Democracies," in Richard Joseph, ed., *State, Conflict, and Democracy in Africa* (Lynne Rienner, 1999), pp. 119-136.

\*Howard Stein, "From Structural Adjustment to 'Poverty Reduction,' Adjustment to the Crisis and the Crisis of Adjustment," Ch. 2 in Howard Stein, *Beyond the World Bank Agenda* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 2008).

**Week 8. Structural Adjustment and Liberalization in Agriculture**

March 6, 8

The economic reform policies of the 1980s and 1990s were supposed to transform the livelihoods of most Africans by changing the politics and economics of agriculture. What did the "Washington Consensus" mean for most African farmers, and what say did African governments, and citizens, have in it? What new challenges did Africa farmers face in the new, more liberalized markets of the late 1980s and 1990s? How are urban and rural economies, and livelihoods, connected?

\*James Ferguson, "'Back to the Land'? The micropolitical economy of 'return' migration," Ch. 4 in Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt* (University of California Press, 1999).

**Week 9. Spring Break**

March 13, 15

**Week 10. Political Liberalizations in the 1990s**

March 20, 22

What explains the pendulum swing from multipartism in the 1950, to one-party rule (or military rule) in the 1960s and 1970s, back to multipartism in the 1990s?

Sandbrook, *Closing the Circle*, Ch. 2, "The Real World of African Democracy"

\*Nicolas Van de Walle, "Africa's Range of Regimes," *Journal of Democracy*, 13/2 (April) 2002: 66-80.

Cooper, Ch. 8, "Africa at the century's turn: South Africa, Rwanda, and Beyond," pp. 191-204.

**Week 11. Elections: Risk and Promise**

March 27, 29

Why are elections sometimes associated with violence in African politics? Which countries and which situations seems more prone to electoral violence than others? How does the election-time violence described in the Boone chapters fit into (or defy) the categorizations proposed by Straus and Taylor? What does Sandbrook mean by "closing the circle"?

\*Scott Straus and Charlie Taylor, "Democratization and Electoral Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1990-2008," in Dorina Bekoe, ed., *Electoral Conflict in Africa*, United States Institute of Peace, USIP Press, *forthcoming* in 2012.

\*Catherine Boone, "Land Conflict at the National Scale: Rwanda," and "Zimbabwe in Comparative Perspective," in C. Boone, *Property and Political Order: Land Rights and the Structure of Politics in Africa*, under review, Dec. 2011

Sandbrook, *Closing the Circle*, Ch. 6, pp. 131-142.

**Week 12. Tues, April 3 EXAM #2**

April 3

**PART III: Africa in a Globalized World Economy**

**Week 12, Th. Globalization and African Agriculture: Issues**

April 5

African countries have moved beyond the debt crisis of the 1980s and early 1990s. With liberalization and globalization, they have diversified their trading partners and continued to move away from the "neocolonial" economic relationships with the former colonial power that characterized the early post-colonial period. Does globalization, including the stunning emergence of China as one of Africa's main economic partners, offer a way forward for African countries? Will new technologies and the end of "neocolonialism" allow African countries to leapfrog the development obstacles of the past?

**Week 13. Cotton Price Wars, GMOs and Organics**

Apr. 10, 12

Cotton is one of Africa's most important export commodities. Does this business lock African countries into the exploitative international economic relationships that Walter Rodney described, or is cotton production a path out of poverty and underdevelopment? Why is cotton at the heart of concerns about fairness and unfairness in the global trade regime (as epitomized by "Cotton Wars" in the WTO), environmental degradation, technology transfer, and poverty? How have the powerful US cotton lobbies shaped prospects for stable livelihoods in sub-Saharan Africa?

William G. Moseley and Leslie C. Gray, *Hanging by a Thread: Cotton, Globalization, and Poverty in Africa* (Ohio. Univ. Press, 2008), Intro., Chs. 1, 9, 10, and Conclusion

**Week 14. Biofuels and Agribusiness: Land Grabbing?**

Apr. 17, 19

In the context of mounting worries of global food crisis and rising demand for biofuels, Africa is the target of a "global land rush" that some welcome as the economic solution to low agricultural productivity and investment, and others deride as a "new scramble for Africa," recolonization, or blatant dispossession of the poor. Is a new wave of investment in agribusiness good or bad for Africa? Who are the winners and losers? What terms and conditions matter in determining the answers?

\*Klaus Deininger, "Challenges posed by the new wave of farmland investment," in *Journal of Peasant Studies (JPS)*, 38/2 (March) 2011.

\*Olivier de Schutter, "How not to think of land-grabbing: Critiques of large-scale investments in farmland," *JPS*, 38/2 (March) 2011.

\*Tania Murray Li, "Centering labor in the land grab debate," *JPS*, 38/2 (March) 2011

**Week 15. China! Agriculture, extractive industries, and infrastructure** Apr. 24, 26

Is China's coming to Africa a blessing, or a curse? Why are Western governments suspicious of China's new interest in Africa? What is the "The China Model" of development, how does it differ from the "Washington Consensus" model, and can it work for Africa? What do Africans think of this post-neocolonial relationship?

\*Catherine Boone and Dhawal Doshi, "The China Model in Africa: A New Brand of Developmentalism," in Robert Springborg, editor, *Development Models in Muslim Contexts: Chinese, 'Islamic' and Neo-liberal Alternatives* (Edinburgh U. Press, 2009).

\*Alden and Hughes, "Harmony and Discord in China's Africa Strategy," *China Quarterly*, 199 (Sept.) 2009.

\*Brautigam and Xiaoyang, "China's Engagement in African Agriculture," *China Quarterly* 199 (Sept) 2009.

**Week 16. Review and Conclusions: Africa in 2050?**

Apr. 30, May 3

Exam #3. Th., May 10, 2:00-3:15 pm (this is our regularly-scheduled final exam period).

<sup>1</sup> Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

<sup>2</sup> By UT policy, to make up work missed due to a religious holiday observance, the student must notify the prof. of the impending absence 14 days before the missed assignment. You will have an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

<sup>3</sup> In cases a fire or other emergency, it may be necessary to evacuate a building rapidly. Upon fire alarm or the announcement of an emergency, all occupants of the building are required to evacuate and assemble outside. Once evacuated, no one may re-enter the building without official instruction to do so. Know all the exit doors of each room and building you occupy at the university, and remember that the nearest exit routes may not be the same as the way you typically enter a building. Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructors in writing during the first week of class.