**HIST 4590 Colonial Africa**

**Spring 2017**

**Dr. Aran MacKinnon, Office: Humber White House**

Tel: O: (478) 445-5211; E-mail: [aran.mackinnon@gcsu.edu](mailto:aran.mackinnon@gcsu.edu)

Office hours: T/TR, 11:00-1:00; W, 10:00-12:00 or by appointment.

Class meetings: T/Th 9:30-10:45, Arts and Sciences 363

**Course Description**: This survey course takes students from the period of initial European contact with Africa, including the era of merchant capital, missionaries and the arrival of external agents of the African diaspora, through the implementation of colonial states to the rise of African nationalism and the development of independent African nations. The main themes include a consideration of the colonial political economy, an exploration of the contrasts and continuities between the western ‘scientific’ paradigm and indigenous understandings of the environment and the development of capitalism in Africa. The emphasis is on creative African initiatives in the shaping of both political and economic change. Students are exposed to important historiographical debates involving colonial, ‘liberal’, Africanist and materialist and post-colonial interpretations of African history.

This is planned as a seminar format course, supported by lectures. Students **MUST** complete the reading assignments and come to class prepared to discuss the topics listed. Students are reminded, however, that reading and writing are essential parts of the course. All students are expected to fulfill the reading assignments in order to follow the course, participate in discussions and complete written assignments. The recommended books and reading assignments are designed to provide students with a basic understanding of the course material. They are by no means an exhaustive list of what you should be reading. I will direct students to supplementary readings from time to time. The more you read, the more you learn. Students are expected to attend all the lectures. If you miss more than two or three lectures, please ensure that you see me and get class notes from a fellow student. I reserve the right to reduce a student’s grade for missing classes.

**Learning outcomes**: Students who successfully complete this course will be able to describe African history and compare various approaches to it. They will also be able to identify and analyze the major developments in imperial and colonial history in Africa. They will be able to account for the geographic and cultural diversity of African societies and how they changed over time and they will be able to compare and contrast the various experiences of people living in different colonial contexts as they changed over time and be able to compare and contrast these with cultures in America.

Texts:

B. Freund: *The Making of Contemporary Africa, 2nd edition*

A. Hochschild*, King Leopold’s Ghost*

Getz, T. and Clarke, L., *Abina and the Important Men 1st or 2nd edition*

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, *A Grain of Wheat*

S. Ousmane, *Xala*

Other readings will be assigned and will be made available to students directly and online.

Course Requirements: Reports and Class Simulation Participation: 20% (one report on a class topic as noted below and one report on your assigned role in the Mau Mau simulation -10% for each)

Research Essay: 25%

Mid-term exam: 25

Final exam: 30%

Exams, reports and the class simulation report will be graded on the following percentages rubric:

Demonstrates clear understanding and analysis of the content material assigned: 35%

Thoroughness of coverage of the material assigned: 20%

Quality and clarity of written expression 30 %

Significance of argument and analysis: 15%

Grading:

-Fails to meet minimum expectations: Below 60%, F

-Meets minimum expectations in 3 out of four criteria: 60-69%, D

-Satisfactorily meets minimum expectations of all four criteria: 70-79%, C

-Significantly exceeds expectations in at least three areas and meets the minimum in the fourth: 80-89%, B

-Significantly exceeds expectations of all four criteria: 90% and above, A

Essay topics and guidelines are attached below. **Essays are to be 5-7 pages in length (1000-1500 words) not including a bibliography**. NB Essays are to be type-written and in conformity with accepted University standards. This essay cannot be in whole or in part a product you have submitted for another course. If you have any queries or require any help writing your essay, please see me or go to go to the University Writing Center. Prior to final submission, I will read and comment upon draft copies of any student’s essay. Please avail yourself of this offer as it is sure to improve your grade. Essays that are handed in late without prior consent will incur a severe penalty of 10% per day.

**A NOTE ON ACADEMIC HONESTY and other class policies**

All students are expected to conduct themselves with honesty and to DO THEIR OWN WORK. Cheating, in whatever form not only does a disservice to you, fellow students and the University community, it is fraud and brings severe disciplinary action. I refer all students to the section on Academic Honesty in the University Catalogue. I reserve the right to fail any student for academic dishonesty, and further disciplinary action may be taken.

-**No electronic devices of any kind may be used during exams, tests or quizzes**.

-Students who are late to class, or who leave early (based on the instructor’s determination of time) will not be permitted to write any tests, quizzes or exams in that class period.

**-NO CELL PHONES IN CLASS**. Students who use their cell phones in class will be asked to leave the class.

-There is no extra credit provided for this course.

-The instructor will not accept work that has been submitted for another course in this course.

-Students may use computers in class only for academically related work. All other uses of computers will be deemed to be causing a disturbance.

-Students causing a disturbance or engaging in disruptive behavior (as deemed so by the instructor and as defined by Georgia College policy) will be asked to leave the class. Persistent disruptions will result in the student being dropped from the class with a failing grade.

**University Policies: Please see the following link for all other applicable policies.**

[**http://www.gcsu.edu/registrar/required-syllabus-statements**](http://www.gcsu.edu/registrar/required-syllabus-statements)

Assignments and lectures (subject to change):

10-12 Jan

Introduction of syllabus, handouts of terms and definitions assignments. African geography and historiography. The Africanist perspective on race, class, gender, generation and ethnicity.

Readings: B. Freund, *Making*, chp. 1

17-19 Jan.

African societies, Trade and Social stratification; European Intrusion and the Expanding Global Economy.

Readings: Walter Rodney, How Europe Underdeveloped Africa chp 4, Parts 4.1 and 4.2 found at:

<http://abahlali.org/files/3295358-walter-rodney.pdf>

Freund, *Making*, chp 2.

24-27 Jan. \*\*\*REPORT 1\*\*\*

Merchant capital; Slavery and Trade; the shift to “legitimate commerce” and informal empire Readings: Freund, *Making*, chps 3 and 4, and PDF readings by J. Thornton.

31 Jan-2 Feb

The theories of Imperialism and the partition of Africa and the Foundations of South Africa: Film Zulu Dawn

Readings: John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, "The Imperialism of Free Trade," *The Economic History Review*, Second series, Vol. VI, no. 1 (1953): Freund, chp. 4.and MacKinnon Chp. II and VI PDF

7-9 Feb

The Scramble and Belgium: Leopold’s Congo: The Hideous and unacceptable face of colonial rule

Reading: *King Leopold’s Ghost* \*\*\*REPORT 2\*\*\* (see below for topics)

14-16 Feb

Imperial benevolence and the continuities of colonial exploitation Film: Red Rubber

Reading *King Leopold’s Ghost* \*\*\*REPORT 3\*\*\* (see below for topic)

21-23 Feb.

The Colonial Project: African agency, collaboration and resistance; colonial culture, society, identity and consciousness

Readings, Freund Chps. 6 and 7 Online and PDF readings: Rob Gordon, ‘Bushmen Banditry’ T. Ranger ’The Invention of Tradition’.

\*\*\*REPORT 4 \*\*\*

28 Feb-2 March

1. Colonial Consciousness continued.
2. \*\*\*Mid-Term Exam\*\*\*

7-9 March.

Women, agency and silences in colonial society

Readings: Getz, *Abina*

14-16 March. The South African system of Segregation mining and migrant labor

Readings: Freund, chps. 8, and online readings: MacKinnon chp VI PDF and Sol Plaatje, Native Life in South Africa, chp. 1 found at:

<http://www.thuto.org/ubh/etext/nlisa/nl01.htm> \*\*\*REPORT 5\*\*\*

21-23 March\*\*\*\*\*Spring Break-NO CLASSES\*\*\*\*\*

28-30 March \*\*\*REPORT 6\*\*\*

African responses to Colonial Rule: From rebellion to liberation struggle; African Nationalism: South Africa and Kenya

Readings: Freund chp. 9 MacKinnon Chp IX Online Readings: Kenyatta and Mandela,

<http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/mandela/mandelahome.html>

<http://www.africaspeaks.com/reasoning/index.php?topic=296.0>

<http://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/1952kenyatta-kau1.html>

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2013/dec/05/nelson-mandela-1964-speech-audio>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dyeaTk8S-Y>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9i56fpNntk

4-6 April Kenya and Mau Mau Film: Simba \*\*\*ESSAY DUE\*\*\*

Readings: Ngũgĩ: ***A Grain of Wheat***

11-13 April Mau Mau \*\*\*\* Simulation\*\*\*\*

British Government response 2013

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/kenya/10103434/Mau-Mau-torture-victims-to-receive-19.9m-compensation-from-Britain.html>

The Case for reparations:

<http://www.bailii.org/cgi-bin/format.cgi?doc=/ew/cases/EWHC/QB/2012/2678.html&query=(Mutua)>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Skg3YHjCL4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3y3zccaj8w>

Readings: J.M Kariuki “Mau Mau Detainee and

Elkins Mau Mau Rehab on D2L

“THE ENEMY WITHIN: LOYALISTS AND THE WAR AGAINST MAU MAU IN KENYA”.  <http://ejournals.ebsco.com/direct.asp?ArticleID=4B349D179B1B360F74F6>

Ngugi’s home page:

<http://www.ngugiwathiongo.com/writings/writings-home.htm>

18-20 April.

T: Decolonization and the West: Lumumba and the Congo Crisis

Readings: Freund chp. 9 and 10, L. De Witte, excerpts from *The Assassination of Lumumba* and Gibbs: Congo Crisis PDF \*\*\* REPORT 7\*\*\*

25-27 April

The post colony: Xala and excerpts from Mamdani

Xala the film, Conclusion and review for final exam

**Take Home Final Exam: Due Wed. 3 May by 10:15 a.m. either in Dr. MacKinnon’s Office mailbox in Humber White house or emailed to:** [**aran.mackinnon@gcsu.edu**](mailto:aran.mackinnon@gcsu.edu)

NB ALL STUDENTS MUST SIT THIS EXAM IN THIS SLOT. No rewrites will be given for this or any other exams.

**Please Note:** Academic dishonesty is a serious offence. I reserve the right to fail any student from the course for acts of plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty. Further sanctions may be applied by the University. I refer all students to the University Honor Code for specific guidelines. If you have any questions about this policy please see me.

**Reports**:

1) Each student is responsible for writing and presenting a 2-3 page (500-750 words) report on one of the class discussion topics listed above (These topics will be assigned by the instructor), This will require you to read the assigned materials, write the report, and to lead the class discussion on the topic.

For topics 2 and 3 on *King Leopold’s Ghost*, use specific examples from the book (refer to page numbers) discuss one of the following:

2) Consider how Leopold gains control of the Congo. How did his project fit into the wider ‘Scramble for Africa’?

or

2) Explain the nature of the rubber regime in the Congo. Why was it so brutal and so reliant on African workers?

3) Discuss the efforts to expose and end Leopold’s rubber regime. Who was involved and why? Were there successful?

**Simulation:**

Each student will be assigned a role based on historical figures and groups from Colonial Kenya during the State of Emergency and the Land and Freedom Movement to research and play in class. For this exercise, you will need to have read the assigned material relating to the topic and then do additional research into the background of the crisis and your particular role in it. You will also need to prepare a written report on your role and set it in the historical context of colonial Kenya. This report needs to be 3-4 pages (750-1000 words) in length. It must explain and define the role you have been assigned, address relevant themes from the course, and explain the significance of your role for understanding the crisis as well as the broader nature of African colonial history.

During class, each person will be called upon to speak as if we were at a post-crisis tribunal seeking to address demands for reparations and admission of guilt as is the case with current legal proceedings in the U.K. to understand how and why the crisis came about, and the implications it had for an independent Kenya.

Please note that these assigned roles and the simulation may touch upon politically, culturally and emotionally sensitive issues for all concerned. Please engage in the exercise with respect and sensitivity to your colleagues, however passionate the discussions may get.

The assigned roles will be:

A leader from KANU

An Oath taking rural peasant

A ‘Mau Mau’ Guerilla fighter

A loyalist policeman

A former ‘Mau Mau’ turned loyalist screener

A white settler farmer

A white colonial official who reports to the British Parliamentary government or the British P.M.

A Kikuyu peasant woman whose husband is imprisoned in the Pipeline

A white prison warden in the detention camps

**TERMS , CONCEPTS AND WORKING DEFINITIONS;**

**African History:** The study of the processes and events which shaped the peoples and environment in the continent of Africa. We will be considering the underlying social, economic and political forces which changed Africa over time.

**Africanist Historiography:** The transforming paradigms and theories that shape our understanding of African history and which place an emphasis on the indigenous peoples of Africa. The term historiography also pertains to the body of historical literature on a given theme or region. Historiography reflects the debates among historians concerning the interpretation of historical facts and ideas.

**Class:** A complex theoretical system that defines social stratification on the basis of economic, social and productive attributes. Loosely speaking, the term class suggests that people operate in their own economic interest according to their position in society. Although historians may define people according to ‘class interest,' class is not static and it is not the only defining feature of a person’s economic or social position. (See also Race, Ethnicity and Gender.) Some historians often see class conflict where producers oppose non-producers (those who own or control capital resources) who ‘exploit’ them as an inherent feature of class relations.

**Ethnicity**: Within African history the concept of ethnicity relates to groupings of people who share a common language, ideas, beliefs, social system and values. Although ethnicity is related to race (see below) the two terms are not necessarily defined by each other. While race may seem to be more fixed than other parts of a person’s identity, it was altered by people in South Africa according to various perceived ideas just as they could mold ethnicity. Ethnicity should be distinguished from the largely defunct historical term ‘tribal’ since this latter term relies too heavily on stereotypes imposed from outside observers. As we will see, ethnicity, and particularly ethnic nationalism can be reconstructed and changed.

**Gender:** The term gender relates to a recognized set of characteristics, and social and economic activities normally associated with either men or women. It should be distinguished from the physical classification of men and women by their sex since men and women can assume different gender roles or activities depending on their circumstances.

**Mode(s) of Production:** A theoretical term, now seldom used which was coined to express the concept of a system of production and its associated forms of social organization. A mode helps identify how a given society or part of a society organizes itself to procure the material goods needed for survival. The modes of production with which we will be concerning ourselves are, for example: Hunter-gatherer- where people organize their labor to procure their material needs from what is available to them in the natural world (the KhoeSan of southern Africa are one example); communalism - where society organizes shared labor tasks such as agriculture and pastoralism with land and resources which are not privately owned, but rather held in trust for all the people; Capitalism where the ‘means of production’ (the tools and resources necessary to produce material needs are ‘owned’ by a particular group or class of people) operate according to market exchanges where people buy and sell goods and labor. According to the classical definition of capitalism, the market, including the sale of labor, is meant to be free from major political control or coercion. A mode of production is therefore partly determined by who owns the tools of production. The identification of any given economic system provides historians with an understanding of how other related social and political activities are organized. Within this overall theoretical construct there lies a notion of ‘progress’ and development from one stage or mode to another. Thus, capitalism is seen to be a more efficient and refined set of economic relations used to secure material needs than hunting and gathering. Without attaching a value judgment to the different ways in which people procure their needs, try to consider capitalism as a system which may develop out of pre-capitalist (communalism and feudalism for example) modes of production. An important thing to note regarding the development of capitalism in Africa -or in any in any area’s historical development- is that different people and societies often employ multiple strategies to satisfy their basic material needs (subsistence) and to accumulate a surplus for times of want, to expand and develop their mode of production, or to invest in improved or expanded production.

**Peasant:** Briefly stated, a peasant is a person who has one foot the capitalist economy of market exchange and one foot in the precapitalist economy of ‘primitive’ cultivation. Peasants generally produce enough food for their family to live on (subsistence) with varying amounts of surplus that can be sold or exchanged for other needs. A peasant’s ultimate security and satisfaction of material needs come from having rights to land and access to family labor. The term suggests that peasants are agricultural producers who are moving toward full integration with the market economy, but that they are sometimes constrained in this effort by dominant groups in society.

**Race:** The classification of people according to constructed ideas associated with their perceived physical characteristics (for example shape of eyes, color of skin, type of hair). In historical perspective, the term race has been used to explain why some groups of people have interests that differ or are, at times, in opposition to other groups. For our purposes, the term also implies a power dominance relationship between Africans and whites. As we will see, however, other social dynamics can come into play. For example, class, ethnicity and gender can also shape social, political and economic relations between races.

**Tradition and Custom:** African societies are sometimes referred to as ‘traditional’ and are seen as wedded to ancient ‘tribal custom'. These terms suggest that African society was static, backward and inherently conservative. They are often used to refer to activities or stages of development that are considered precapitalist or ‘primitive.' Just because some features of African society may appear to be traditional and primitive does not mean they have lesser value. Indeed, historians are discovering that many indigenous African practices have significant merit, not only in the African context, but also in terms of the western ‘scientific’ paradigm. Moreover, while many traditions and customs persist over time we must consider why this was the case. In some instances, traditions have been resurrected from the past or reinvented to serve new needs.

**An Introduction To African History: Colonial Africa:**

**ESSAY TOPICS**

The essay is to be a scholarly piece of writing 1000-1500 words (5-7 pages) words in length. It must have a topic, an introductory paragraph, an argument and a conclusion. The introduction should be a statement of purpose; it should explain what you are going to discuss, what questions you are going to address, and what framework (such as the theoretical approach) you will use. The main body of the essay puts forward your argument. For example, do you agree or disagree with the topic statement and show why and how you agree/disagree. Similarly, if asked to discuss a topic or an issue, you must critically analyze the topic and what others have said about it. You need to put forward **your own ideas** based on reading and research, not simply regurgitate what you have read The conclusion should not simply be a reiteration of the topic, such as: ‘And so, in conclusion, it can be seen from the above that Europeans invaded Africa. The conclusion should sum up your argument and explain what you have discovered.

**N.B. For the essay you should get someone to proof-read your essay and then make sure that you correct errors. I will take marks off if your essay has grammatical, syntactical, or spelling errors. You must also underline the statement of your argument.**

Format: The essay should be type-written. It must be clear, concise, and understandable. The essay must be written with correct grammar and spelling, and in plain English. Avoid obscure terminology and ambiguous phrases.

Citations: The essay must give credit where it is due. It is academically dishonest to present someone else’s work as your own. This includes the use of excerpts or verbatim copying of another’s work, including all texts, journal articles and monographs without giving proper credit.

The proper format for history citations is as follows: In the text, ideas, direct quotations, facts and figures that are not in the realm of general knowledge and references to other works should have a sequentially marked footnote.[[1]](#footnote-1)1 (see below)

The citation should read as follows, for example:

For Books

J Iliffe, *Africans. The History of a Continent* ( New York, 1995), pp (for pages, or p. for page) 1-3

For articles

B. Freund, ‘Rural Struggles and Transformations in South Africa’, *South African Historical Journal* (hereafter *SAHJ*), Vol. 19, No. 1, 1987, pp. 23-45, p. 25.

For articles from books

T. Ranger, ‘ The nineteenth century in Southern Rhodesia’, T. Ranger (ed. For editor), *Aspects of Central African History*, Second Edition (London, 1977), pp. 112-153, pp. 118-121

You may use underlining for book titles, rather than italics.

Bibliography: All essays must have a bibliography which lists the books and articles you consulted for the work. Books and articles should be listed under separate headings The bibliography should be in alphabetical order, listing the author’s surname first and their initials second:

Bibliography

Books

Oliver, R. and Atmore, A., *Africa Since 1800* , Fourth Edition (New York, 1994)

Articles

Roberts, A., ‘The political history of twentieth century Zambia’, in T. Ranger (ed.) *Aspects of Central African History*, Second Edition (London, 1977), pp. 154-189.

**If you have any questions, need guidance, or would like me to make comments on a draft version of your essay, please see me during office hours, or by appointment.**

Essay Topics You may select a topic from below for the research essay, or you may develop your own topic in consultation with me. You must get my approval for a topic which you develop yourself.

1) How did merchant capital shape the foundations of South Africa?

2) What impact did the British ‘Abolition’ of the slave trade have on the West African economy and society?

3) Using an example from either French or British West Africa, discuss the impact of colonial invasions on African society.

4) Using one example, discuss how colonialism affected different parts of African society socially, politically and economically. You should try to consider issues such as ‘indirect rule’, white settlement and labor relations in a colonial state.

5) Did independent African states emerge as a result of ‘decolonization’ or national liberation movements? You should include a consideration of European motives for ending direct colonial rule and the leadership of African Nationalist movements.

6) Using an example, discuss resistance to colonial rule in an African country. You should try to consider how Africans used different strategies to improve their position at different times.

1. 1 Such as this. You may also use endnotes, where the actual citation occurs at the end of the essay, but before the bibliography [↑](#footnote-ref-1)