AFRICAN CITIES / 10281

GSAPP_Columbia University SPRING 2015

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Columbia University
Email: matsipa@gmail.com
Location: 412 Avery Hall
Time: Thursday 9-11 am
Friday 9 – 11am
Consultation Times: Thursdays 13:00 -15:00
Other Times by appointment only please

Mary Sibande, Long Live the Dead Queen, Johannesburg (2010)
Photo by 2point 8photography
COURSE OUTLINE

This seminar seeks to engage postcolonial scholarship with questions of both political economy and space in African Cities. It seeks to do so with by contextualizing our understandings of power and inequality at multiple scales geographic. Consequently, this seminar takes post-colonial studies as its point of departure by focusing on how processes of colonialism/imperialism continue even after the formal dissolution of empire. Rather than a totalizing overview of all African cities, the objective of this course is to explore – critically - a few key themes and conceptual frameworks applied to ‘African cities’, as well as to familiarize ourselves with their diversity. Therefore, you will be expected to engage with colonial urban legacies, (post)-colonial urban dynamics and the challenges of neo-liberal globalization. By the end of the seminar, you will also be expected to analyze the main discourses on African cities critically; to present and discuss the various research trends on African cities; and to illustrate theoretical debates through a case study of your choice.

CLASS SCHEDULE

This course will be run twice a week as a series of seminars around the themes defined in the course outline and reading material. You are expected to arrive on time, participate critically with all the required texts as well as to have done a close reading of all the texts before you come to class. It takes time to fully understand a text, please make sure that you allocate enough reading time for yourself so that you can participate in class discussions.

SYLLABUS

03/26 WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION

03/27 WEEK 1: TERRA NULLUS?


IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT: RE-VISITING THE ARCHIVE: PRE COLONIAL AFRICAN CITIES

***** (Due: Friday 03/27) ****

Provide a 500 word written summary and a 5 minute Power Point Presentation on one pre-16th Century African city. Describe in as much detail as possible, the following: The name, size historical period and location of the city.

1. Name, Location and period: (please include as many images as are available).
2. The relationship between spatial organization and political and social structure.
3. The number of inhabitants
4. Key Political and Cultural Institutions
5. Types of economic activities and trade.
6. Religious practices and material culture.
7. Key architectural elements
8. References (please see document attached for an abridged reading list)

Pre-colonial African Cities to Consider (you may include others):

- **Benin City**, Benin Empire [Nigeria]; 13th Century
- **Kano**, [Nigeria] 15th Century
- **The Great Zimbabwe**, [Zimbabwe] 12th-14th Century
- **Timbuktu**, Mali Empire [Mali] 13th-14th century
- **Kumasi**, Ashante Kingdom, [Ghana] 10th – 19th Century
- **Kilwa** (or Zanzibar or Mombasa), [Tanzania] 9th-13th Century
- **Loango**, Kingdom of Congo, [Congo/ Angola] 15th Century
- **Gedi and Mogadishu** [Kenya/Somalia], 14th Century

**04/02 WEEK 2.1 THE SCRAMBLE FOR AFRICA**


**04/03 WEEK 2.2: DISCURSIVE FORMATIONS AND REGIMES OF COLONIAL RULE**


**04/09 WEEK 3.1: ORDER AND DISORDER IN AFRICAN CITIES**


04/10 WEEK 3.2 NEOLIBERAL URBANISMS

**** [HOUSING THE MAJORITY CONFERENCE TODAY: 12-8PM, Wood Auditorium, CUI] ****


04/16 WEEK 4.1: INFRASTRUCTURES

Film Screening: Lagos/Koolhaas. 2006. Bregtje van der Haak
Produced by Sylvia Baan for Pieter van Huystee Film]


04/17 WEEK 4.2: AFRICA RISING?


Recommended Reading


04/23 WEEK 5.1 RESEARCH PROPOSALS: power point and in-depth discussion
04/24 WEEK 5.2: RESEARCH PROPOSALS and in-depth class discussion

FINAL PAPER SUBMISSION: Friday May 8, 2015 4pm

ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Final Grades for this course will be based on the following outcomes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Due</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Re-Visiting the Archive: Pre-Colonial African Cities Written Summary</td>
<td>500 words + In-class Power-Point presentation (10-15 minutes per city)</td>
<td>03/27</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>X 4 Short Reading Responses</td>
<td>(100 words each)</td>
<td>Bi-weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>X 1 Presentations of Reading and Discussion</td>
<td>1000 words</td>
<td>Bi-weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Attendance and Discussion</td>
<td>10 sessions</td>
<td>Bi-weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Proposal: Final Essay African City Case Study and analysis</td>
<td>PowerPoint presentation of research question and an outline of case study</td>
<td>04/23 and 04/25</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Final Essay: African City Case Study and Analysis</td>
<td>5000-8000 words (including references and title page)</td>
<td>05/08</td>
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READING RESPONSE - 100 words (10%) – 4 in total.

Each week, we will conduct a close reading and critique of the texts provided and you will submit a 100 word reading response at the end of class. This is not a summary. Rather it is a record of your thoughts and questions regarding the themes under discussion. All responses are due on the day of discussion.

IN-CLASS PRESENTATION OF READINGS: 20%

Each session will be led by a student outlining the key arguments provided by the authors

Your reading review may be structured in the following way:

1. Name of author(s) /title /and date of the text.
2. What is the main argument made by the author(s) – Please provide a brief summary of the key argument.
3. What evidence, if any does the author use to support his/her argument? (please provide examples)
4. What method does the author use (case-study, discourse analysis, ethnographic, archival, etc.)? Do you think it is effective for the kind of argument they are trying to make?
5. What are the objectives of the author? From which or who’s perspective does the author write? Who’s interests does the text serve?
6. What is your thoughts/critique of the text?
7. References - using the Harvard System
FINAL (EXAM) ESSAY; 5000- 8000 WORDS (50%)

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate your knowledge of one African city and your ability to critically engage with debates on an issue related to that city and in the context of class discussions. You may draw on work already done in class to support your argument but you must also draw on evidence and theory from empirical research on that city.

Choose a topic and case study based on the themes discussed in class. The essay must demonstrate both knowledge and a critical analysis of the case study and theory under consideration. The essay must include a location map and it may include visual representations of the city under consideration. (This can be graphs, plans, photographs, etc.). All visual material must be correctly referenced.

Resources:

An abridged reference list is included in this syllabus. However, there are a number of Journals that specialize in African Cities or African studies that may be a useful resource for more information on your research topic, such as:

- African Studies
- African Affairs
- African Studies Review
- African Historical studies
- Canadian Journal of African Studies
- Journal of Modern African Studies
- Urban Studies
- Politikon
- Environment and Urbanization
- Third World Quarterly
- Cities
- South African Historical Journal
- Journal of Southern African Studies

You may also review books on African Cities, architecture or Politics or conduct on-line searches through various online databases

ACADEMIC HONESTY and PLAGIARISM.

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please refer to the Columbia University Policy on Plagiarism, Referencing and Copyright for further details.
RECOMMENDED READINGS

**PRE-COLONIAL AFRICAN CITIES**


W.W Norton and Company. Inc.


WILLET, F. 1971. *African Art*. Thames and Hudson,

**REPRESENTATION AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF RACE**


THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA


IMPERIALISM AND COLONIAL URBANISM


Orientalism. Vintage Books Division,


POLITICAL ECONOMY OF APARTHEID CITIES


FREUND, B et al (Eds). 2002; *(D) urban Vortex; South African City in Transition*, University of Natal Press.


**TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY AND ETHNIC POLITICS**


**PROCESSES OF URBANIZATION AND MIGRATION**


URBAN INFORMALITY


POST-COLONIAL URBANISMS


ROBINSON, J. 2002. “Global and World Cities: A view from off the Map” International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 26: 3, 531-554


CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN CITIZENSHIP


SIMONE A. M. 2009. *City Life Form Jakarta to Dakar: Movements at the Crossroads*. (Global Realities). Routledge


