African Politics

Political Science 146A
Stanford University, Fall Quarter 2015
TTh 9:30-11:20am
Course Outline
David Laitin – Instructor
Mashail Aman Malik – Teaching Assistant
Darin Christensen – Data “fundi”

Africa has lagged the rest of the developing world in terms of economic development, the establishment of social order and effective governance, and the consolidation of democracy. This course seeks to identify the historical and political sources accounting for this lag, and to provide extensive case study and statistical material to understand what sustains it, and how it might be overcome.

Grading and Assignments: For three topics on the syllabus (one from weeks 1-3; one from weeks 4-6; and one from weeks 7-9), students are required to submit a paper (about 1,200 words) advancing a point of view based on the lecture, the required readings, and at least one reference that refers to the reading, acquired through library resources or google scholar. The paper can advance a thesis in regard to one of the readings, or seek to synthesize two or three readings geared towards understanding how the readings on a given topic tie together. One of the papers can be collaborative among two or three students who worked together for a section assignment. Each of these papers will constitute 25% of the grade. Contributions to discussions in the section will constitute 15% of the grade. A final exam that will test only the acquaintance with the lectures and required readings, will constitute 10% of the grade; but passing the final exam is necessary to pass the course.

Books and Materials

See Coursework for access to required readings for this course.

Recommended for purchase:
Chinua Achebe *Things fall apart* (Anchor)
ISBN-10: 0385474547

I. Introduction

1. Who is teaching this course? Laitin’s research in Somalia, Nigeria and Ghana
2. Africa: the last frontier for development theorists: slow economic growth; state failure; weak democratization

Crawford Young *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective*, pp. 1-8

**II. From Great Expectations to Unfulfilled Dreams**

3. The Charismatic Founders and Their Dreams

Jomo Kenyatta *Facing Mount Kenya*, Preface pp. xv-xxi

Kenneth Kaunda *Zambia Shall be Free*, pp. 1-35; 151-60

Obafemi Awolowo *Awo*, chapters 1 (pp. 1-11); 10 (pp. 113-132); and 14 (pp. 213-248).

Julius Nyerere “Education for Self-Reliance”. In *Freedom and Socialism*, pp. 267-290

4. The Cultural Project: Négritude, the African Personality and Cultural Autonomy


E. Albaugh *State-Building and Multilingual Education in Africa*, chap. 2, pp. 22-52

5. The First Signs of Troubles: Military Coups and the Replacement of the Charismatic Founders


6. The Shadow, Prebendal, or Turbulent State

William Reno *Corruption and State Politics in Sierra Leone* pp. 1-27; 104-30; 177-88

Richard Joseph *Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria: The Rise and Fall of the Second Republic* pp. 1-12; 55-68.

Alex de Waal *The Real Politics of the Horn of Africa: Money, guns and the business of power*, pages TBA

7-8. The breakdown of Order

Stephen Ellis *The Mask of Anarchy*, Introduction (pp. 1-31)

William Reno *Warfare in Independent Africa*, chaps. 3-6

D. Christensen “‘Concession Stands: The Consequences of Foreign Investment in Mining for Protest in Africa’

9. Failures in Public Health

Evan Lieberman Boundaries of Contagion: How Ethnic Politics Have Shaped Government Responses to AIDS, chap. 4


III. Why has Africa been the “final frontier”?

10. Geography and Demography

Jeffrey Herbst States and Power in Africa chs. 1, 5


11. The Slave Trade

Basil Davidson The African Slave Trade pp. 53-87

Nathan Nunn “The Long Term Effects of Africa’s Slave Trade” QJE 2008: 123(1): 139-76


12. Christian and Muslim Missionaries confront Traditional Religions

C. Achebe Things Fall Apart

RD Woodberry “The Missionary Roots of liberal democracy” APSR 2012: 106(2): 244-74


13. Berlin in 1884-85 and the partition of Africa


14. The Colonial State

Crawford Young *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective*, pp. 77-140, 278-92

Richard Reid *Warfare in African History*, pp. 107-48

D. Laitin “Hegemony and Religious Conflict: British Imperial Control and Political Change in Yorubaland. In *Bringing the State Back In*, pp. 285-316

15. Ethnic Linguistic Fractionalization


16. State Building in the Post-Colonial Era


R. Bates *Prosperity and Violence*, Chapters 2-4 (pp. 14-66)

17. Economic Doctrines and Incentives in Post-Colonial World


James C. Scott *Seeing Like a State*, Introduction, pp. 1-8 and Chapter 7, pp. 223-61


Robert Bates *Markets and States in Africa*, chapters 1-2 (pp. 11-44)
IV. Towards a New Era

18. Democratization and the Fourth Wave

   Michael Bratton “Where do Elections Lead in Africa?” ch. 2 in M. Bratton, ed. Voting and Democratic Citizenship in Africa”

   Leonardo Arriola Multiethnic Coalitions in Africa chs. 1, 8

19. Explaining Success Stories in Africa


20. Rebuilding Conflict Ridden States

   Macartan Humphreys and Jeremy Weinstein “Demobilization and Reintegration” Journal of Conflict Resolution (August 2007)


Students with Disabilities

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL: http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae).