

## PS 129 - AFRICAN POLITICS

Prof. P. Robinson  
Office: 102 Packard Hall  
Office Hours: Tues, 10am-12 noon

Fall 2010  
Class Location: Eaton 333  
G+ Block: (M-W, 1:30-2:45pm)

*Additional office hours may be scheduled by appointment. Appointments are best arranged via e-mail.*

What accounts for the prevailing patterns of ethnic, gender, race and status relations in present-day Africa? To what extent have they been prefigured by earlier histories? How have various political forces sought to overturn discriminatory legal and racial orders, to end the various forms of gender bias, to reverse exclusion from citizenship rights, or to end authoritarian rule? How do we make sense of current African debates about citizenship, women's rights, and alternative forms of modernity?

This is a Comparative Politics course that is also listed with Women's Studies. It examines issues of political identity, gender relationships and citizenship in contemporary Africa – through analytical frameworks that focus on processes of democratization, modes of interest representation, and the challenges of nation-building. You will learn how to identify distinctive patterns of ethnic, race and gender relations; how to historicize a concept in order to analyze change over time; how social categories become a basis for constructing political identities; and how to apply these constructs in a variety of approaches to the analysis of democracy and the dynamics of political inclusion and exclusion. Case studies that vary the context are used to provide comparative perspective, to test hypotheses, and to ground the phenomena we try to understand in concrete situations. Particular emphasis is paid to the relationship between politics and culture.

I will not try to be comprehensive with regard to the entire continent but hope to abstract patterns that are illustrative of the cultures of politics in Africa. The aim is to understand the changing socioeconomic, cultural, and gender dynamics of African societies as we relate these processes to general theories of politics and governance.

### Course Requirements & Assessment

There will be one mid-semester examination, a news analysis assignment, and a final examination. Weighted equally, these three assessments count for 90% of the course grade. The news analysis consists of two segments: a) a 4-6 page background paper and b) a 6-8 page discussion of the critical political interests and issues involved.

In addition to the required books and journal articles, this course has a Blackboard site that hosts supplemental documents, external links, and online exercises. You are expected to logon to the site at least once a week to keep current with Africa news and to participate in the various online assignments. The online assignments, together with in-class presentations, will account for 10% of the final course grade. The coursesite can be accessed at the following URL: <http://blackboard.tufts.edu>

Midterm Examination – Wednesday, October 20  
Background paper due – Monday, November 8  
Analysis Paper due – Monday, November 22  
Final Examination – Thursday, December 16 from 12:00pm – 2:00pm

Make-up exams will be given only with a written, verified, medical excuse. Papers more than one week late will be penalized. Please Note: Papers will be submitted through TurnItIn.com.

## Books for Purchase in the Campus Bookstore

- Kelly Askew – *Performing the Nation: Swahili Music and Cultural Politics in Tanzania*  
Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle – *Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective*  
Barbara Callaway and Lucy Creevey – *The Heritage of Islam: Women, Religion and Politics in West Africa*  
Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf – *This Child Will Be Great: Memoir of a Remarkable Life by Africa's First Woman President*  
Mahmood Mamdani – *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*  
Anthony W. Marx – *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of the United States, South Africa and Brazil*  
Michael Schatzberg – *Political Legitimacy in Middle Africa: Father, Family, Food*  
Aili Mari Tripp – *Women and Politics in Uganda*

All Additional readings listed on the syllabus are available on the Blackboard coursesite.

### I. THE PRESIDENT'S FORUM WITH YOUNG AFRICAN LEADERS: BREAKING OLD HABITS

September 8: Introduction: Citizens and Subjects – A Tale of Two Africas

View video: “Town Hall with President Obama”

U.S. Department of State website

<http://www.state.gov/p/af/pfyal/index.htm>

Photograph students for Blackboard site

Assignment: Students create Personal Homepages on PS129 Blackboard Site

### II. DEMOCRACY, CITIZENSHIP AND POLITICAL INCLUSION

September 13: Mahmood Mamdani, Citizen and Subject, “The Bifurcated State,” pp. 16-18

John Dryzek, Inclusion and the Dynamics of Democratization," American Political Science Review, 90/3 (September 1996): 475-487

Assignment<sub>1</sub>: Take Preliminary LeaderPix Quiz online

September 15: View Video: *Hopes on the Horizon, Part I*

HOPES ON THE HORIZON chronicles the rise of pro-democracy movements in six African countries during the 1990s: Benin, Nigeria, Morocco, Rwanda, Mozambique, South Africa. This two-hour documentary tells the stories of the men and women who initiated, witnessed, and participated in these changes.

BENIN: CITIZENS EFFECT A PEACEFUL TRANSITION FROM DICTATORSHIP TO DEMOCRACY

NIGERIA: A HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT CHALLENGES THE MILITARY

RWANDA: HISTORIANS BUILD A PLATFORM FOR DIALOGUE

Assignment<sub>2</sub>: Online Discussion relating Dryzek's concept of autonomous civil society to the events in the film *Hopes on the Horizon*

### III. POLITICAL LEGITIMACY AND CULTURES OF POLITICS

September 20: Michael Schatzberg, Political Legitimacy in Middle Africa: Father, Family, Food

Ch. 1 – Metaphor and Matrix,

Ch. 2. – Representations of Power

Ch. 3 – Parameters of the Political

September 22: Schatzberg, Political Legitimacy

Ch. 5 – Matrix I: The Father-Chief

Ch. 6 – Matrix II: Gender and Generation

Ch. 7 – Democracy and the Logic of Legitimacy

### IV. GENDER AND POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

September 27: Gwendolyn Mikell, "African Feminism: Toward a New Politics of Representation," Feminist Studies 21/2 (Summer 1995): 405-424

*Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, a film by Abigail Disney & Gini Reticker

Assignment<sub>3</sub>: LeaderPix bio posting – This assignment is designed to familiarize you with politically prominent African personalities.

September 29: Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, This Child Will Be Great

October 4: Ali Mari Tripp, Women and Politics in Uganda

Ch. 1 – Women's Mobilization and Societal Autonomy in Comparative African Perspective

Ch. 3 – The National Resistance Movement: Closing Political Space

Ch. 4 – The Political Impact of the Women's Movement under the NRM

October 6: Tripp, Women and Politics in Uganda

Ch. 6 – Going against the grain: Women's Challenges and the Politicization of Ethnicity & Religion

Ch. 11 – Gender & Institutional Analysis: The Limits of Political Representation

- October 11: Tripp, Women and Politics in Uganda, case study presentations:  
 Ch. 7 – Reconfiguring the Political: *The story of a Jinja Health Clinic*  
 Ch. 8 – The Practical & the Political: *A Battle for Market Stalls & Power*  
 Ch. 9 – Resisting Patronage Politics: *The Case of Kawaala Housing Project*  
 Ch. 10 – Anatomy of a Deception: “*Something is Fishy in Kamuli*”

V. POLITICAL IDENTITY: DEFINITIONS, IMPLICATINS & CONSEQUENCES

- October 13: Columbus Day (*University Holiday*) CLASSES HELD

Mahmood Mamdani, When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda

Introduction: Thinking about Genocide, pp. 3-14

Ch. 1 – Defining the Crisis of Postcolonial Citizenship: Settler and Native as Political Identities, pp. 19-39

Ch. 4 – The “Social Revolution” of 1959

- October 18: Mamdani, When Victims Become Killers

Ch. 6 – The Politics of Indigeneity in Uganda: Background to the RFP Invasion

Ch. 7 – The Civil War and the Genocide, p. 185, pp. 209-233

Ch. 8 – The Citizenship Crisis in Eastern Congo, pp. 243-247

Conclusion – Political Reform after Genocide, pp. 270-282

- October 20: Midterm Exam

- October 25 Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE – Rwanda Chapter), “Agathe Uwilingiyimana: The Rebel,” a biography

PowerPoint presentation: *Political Cartoons in Pre-genocide Rwanda in Comparative Perspective*

VI. NATION-BUILDING AND POLITICAL IDENTITY

- October 27 Anthony Marx, Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of South Africa, the United States and Brazil

Ch. 1 – Introduction, pp. 1-26

- November 1: Anthony Marx, Making Race and Nation:

Ch. 2 – Trajectories from Colonialism – pp. 29-46

Comparative Overview & Conclusion, pp. 264-278

- November 3: Marx, Making Race and Nation

Case study presentations

## VII. ISLAM, GENDER & CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS

November 8: Background Paper Due

Barbara Callaway and Lucy Creevey, The Heritage of Islam: Women and Politics in West Africa

Ch. 1 – Introduction: Does Religion Shape or Reflect Society?

Ch. 2 – The Islamic Encounter

Ch. 3 – Socialization and the Subordination of Women

November 10: Ch. 4 – Education and Attitudes Toward Women

Ch. 6 – The Political Empowerment of Women

Ch. 7 – Conclusion

Assignment<sub>4</sub>: The Heritage of Islam - Online Exercise based on the Callaway and Creevey book, The Heritage of Islam

November 15: Callaway and Creevey, The Heritage of Islam

Case Study presentations

View PowerPoint on Blackboard: *Islam and Female Empowerment among the Tijaniyya in Niger*

Assignment<sub>5</sub>: Strategies of Female Empowerment – Online Exercise based on the PowerPoint presentation about Saïda Oumul Khariy Niasse

November 17 Film showing: *Hopes on the Horizon, Part II*

By the late 1980s, individuals and groups in many African countries began to assert their rights to own land, be represented in government, educate their children, change economic structures, document their history, and gain equal rights for women and ethnic minorities.

MOROCCO: WOMEN'S RIGHTS ACTIVISTS REFORM THE TRADITIONAL FAMILY CODE

MOZAMBIQUE: AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES ADVOCATE ECONOMIC REFORM AND LAND RIGHTS

SOUTH AFRICA: A TOWNSHIP UNITES TO PROMOTE QUALITY EDUCATION

Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle, Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective

Introduction, pp. 1-18

*PTR attending African Studies Association annual meeting in SFO*

## VIII. REGIME CHANGE AND DEMOCRATIZATION

November 22: Analysis Paper Due

Bratton and van de Walle, Democratic Experiments

Ch. 1 – Approaches to Democratization, pp. 41-60

Ch. 2 – Neopatrimonial Rule in Africa, pp. 61-96  
Ch. 3 – Africa’s Divergent Transitions, pp. 97-127

November 24: *No Classes*

November 25 Thanksgiving (*University Holiday*) No Classes

November 29: Bratton and van de Walle, Democratic Experiments  
Case study presentations  
Ch. 6 – Explaining Democratic Transitions, pp. 194-232  
Bratton and van de Walle, Democratic Experiments  
Ch. 7 – The Prospects for Democracy, pp. 233-267

Assignment<sub>6</sub>: Online exercise on the Founding Principles of African independence.

## IX. CONSTRUCTING A CULTURE OF POLITICS

December 1 View Video: Film showing: Ali Mazrui – *The Africans, A Triple Heritage*  
Program 6 – In In Search of Stability  
In a continent where more than 70 coups have taken place in the last 30 years, the question of governing effectively is critical. This segment compares African military regimes, one-party states, Marxism in Mozambique, and the styles of the presidents of Tanzania and Zaire..

Ali A. Mazrui and Alamin M. Mazrui, Political Culture of Language: Swahili, Society and the State, “Kiswahili and Political Participation, pp. 22-30, “Kiswahili and Secularization, pp. 30-35, and “Kiswahili and Political Integration, pp. 101-114

December 6: Kelly Askew, Performing the Nation: Swahili Music and Cultural Politics in Tanzania,  
Ch. 1 – Arts of Governance  
Ch. 2 – Tanga, Tanganyika, Tanzania  
Ch. 5 – Cultural Revolution in Tanzania?, pp. 157-161, 169-195

December 8: Askew, Performing the Nation: Swahili Music and Cultural Politics in Tanzania  
Ch. 6 – Competing Agendas: The Production of Tanzanian National Culture, pp. 221-223  
Ch. 7 – Of Mwanayas and Multipartyism  
Ch. 8 – Conclusion: Cultural Policy by and for the People

Final Exam: Thursday, December 16 from 12:00pm – 2:00pm

*This Political Science Course is classified in the Department's Comparative Politics subfield. It meets the following Thematic Concentration requirements for the Program in International Relations: Regional and Comparative Analysis, Africa (1C) and The United States in World Affairs (5). It also satisfies the World Civilization requirement, and serves as an Elective for the Women's Studies Major and Minor, the American Studies Major, as well as the Africa in the New World Interdisciplinary Minor.*