

**Anthropology/ Africana/ Human Rights 262**  
**Colonialism, Law, and Human Rights in Africa**  
**Autumn 2004**

Professor Jesse Weaver Shipley  
Office Hours: T. 2:30-4:30 or by appt.  
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This course examines the colonial and missionary legacies of contemporary discourses of human rights and development. We will use a critical eye to examine how and why Western donor agencies, states, and individuals unwittingly draw on centuries old tropes of poverty, degradation, and helplessness of non-Western African peoples. Using historical descriptions of the encounters between Europeans and Africans in West Africa and South Africa we will unpack Western assumptions about African societies. These sources help reveal the contradictions at the root of liberal discourses of rights and development. We will interrogate how “aid” implies a specific kind of Western individual, rights-bearing subject which has implications for the development of global capitalism and the nation-state. We will look at African political and economic systems through case studies from Ghana, Nigeria, and post-Apartheid South Africa which reveal the complex legacies of human rights and development for the people involved. We will look at the dual legacy of British colonial law in the relationship between “traditional” customary law and “modern” state courts as a primary site for understanding conflicts over rights, citizenship, and the role of the individual in society. We will posit complex historical and cultural frameworks of understanding each particular case. This class is designed for students interested in research, or development in Africa and will provide some of the theoretical and empirical contexts for the students to approach their own projects critically. More broadly speaking this course shows the complex contemporary implications of how Africa and the “developing” world has been understood from the perspective of the European enlightenment.

**Required Texts**

- Allman, Jean and Victoria Tashjian. 2000. *I will not eat stone : a women's history of colonial Asante*. Portsmouth, NH : Heinemann ; Oxford [England] : J. Currey.
- Ferguson, James. 1994. *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development," Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Mamdani, Mahmood ed. 2000. *Beyond rights talk and culture talk : comparative essays on the politics of rights and culture*. New York : St. Martin's Press.
- Mamdani, Mahmood. 1996. *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Wilson, Richard A. and Jon P. Mitchell eds. 2003. *Human Rights in Global Perspective: Anthropological Studies of Rights, Claims and Entitlements*. Routledge.

**Recommended Texts**

- Galvan, Dennis C. 2004. *The State Must be Our Master of Fire: How Peasants Craft Culturally Sustainable Development in Senegal*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Crewe, Emma and Elizabeth Harrison. 1999. *Whose Development? An Ethnography of Aid*. Zed Books.
- Escobar, Arturo. 1995. *Encountering Development*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

**Grading and Requirements**

**Presentation:** This class will involve lectures but also emphasizes student participation in a seminar format. Each student will be responsible for presenting the reading one week during the semester. They will lead class discussion, bringing in questions to help inspire and provoke the class to think through the material. Presenters can use the recommended reading to help prepare. The presentation will be accompanied by a 2-3 page write-up by each presenter to be handed in the day of the presentation.

**Midterm:** The midterm essay will be **handed out in class October 13**. Students be given primary documenty and will answer the accompanying question in the form of a 4-5 page essay **due October 20**.

**Final Paper:** Students can either write an original research paper or do a critical analysis several of the theoretical themes addressed in the course. Final papers will be presented to the class (5-10 minutes) the last week of class. **FINAL PAPERS ARE DUE DECEMBER 6.**

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| <i>Participation and Class Presentation</i>    | 20% |
| <i>Final Presentation</i>                      | 10% |
| <i>Midterm Essay</i>                           | 20% |
| <i>Final Paper- Due December 6 (10-18 pp.)</i> | 50% |

**Other Requirements:** Students are expected to attend all classes, complete the reading, and actively participate. If a student misses four classes they will automatically fail the course. Cell phones must be turned off during class. Plagiarism is unacceptable and students are expected to understand acceptable uses of citation and reference. Please consult the instructor for further discussion of these issues.

## **Course Outline**

### **Week 1—Introduction: Human Rights and Wrongs**

*Wednesday 1 September*

### **Week 2—Rights Talk, Liberalism, and the Production of Community**

*Monday 6 September*

Anderson, Benedict 1991 *Imagined Communities: reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso. Pp. 1-36.

Apadurai, Arjun. 1996 *Modernity at Large: The Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Playing with Modernity: The Decolonization of Indian Cricket.

*Wednesday 8 September*

Comaroff and Comaroff. 2004 Criminal Justice, Cultural Justice: The Limits of Liberalism and the Pragmatics of Difference in the New South Africa. *American Ethnologist* 31:2.

Josephides, Lisette. 2003. The Rights of Being Human. In *Human Rights in Global Perspective: Anthropological Studies of Rights, Claims and Entitlements*. Wilson, Richard A. and Jon P. Mitchell eds. Routledge.

[Presenters—Lauren and Josh]

### **Week 3—Law and Missionization: Discursive Fields and Colonial Forms of Personhood**

*Monday 13 September*

Comaroff and Comaroff. 1997. New Persons, Old Subjects: Rights, Identities, and Moral Communities. In *Of Revelation and Revolution Volume II*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lugard, Lord. 1922. *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*. Selections.

Gluckman, Max. 1949. The Village Headman in British Central Africa. in *Africa*. XIX:2.

*Recommended:*

Cohn, Bernard. 1996. Law and the Colonial State in India. In *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

*Wednesday 15 September*

Foucault, Michel. 1972. *The Archaeology of Knowledge & the Discourse on Language*. New York: Pantheon. Pp. 21-49.

Comaroff, John L. 1989. Images of Empire, Contests of Conscience: Models of Colonial Domination in South Africa. *American Ethnologist* 16:4.

Sahlins, Marshall. 1994. Cosmologies of Capitalism: the Trans-Pacific Sector of “The World System.” In *Culture/ Power/ History*. Nicholas Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry Ortner. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

*Recommended:*

Timothy Mitchell. *Colonizing Egypt*.

Fabian, Johannes. *Language and Colonial Domination*.

[Presenters—Litta, Morgan]

### **Week 4—Intimate Legacies of the Colonial State: Citizens and Subjects**

*Monday 20 September*

Mamdani, Mahmood. 1996. *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

*Recommended:*

Balibar, Etienne. 1991. The National Form: History and Ideology. In *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*. London: Verso.

**Wednesday 22 September**

Mamdani, Mahmood. 1996. *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

[Presenters—Kristia, Ira, Kit]

**Week 5— Discourses of Development and Rights**

**Monday 27 September**

Ferguson, James. 1994. *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development," Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

*Recommended:*

Stiglitz, Joseph E. 2002. *Globalization and its Discontents*. Pp. 3-88, 195-213.

**Wednesday 29 September**

Ferguson, James. 1994. *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development," Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

*Recommended:*

Crewe, Emma and Elizabeth Harrison. 1999. *Whose Development? An Ethnography of Aid*. Zed Books.

Turner, Terrence 1994 Anthropology and Multiculturalism: What is Anthropology that Multiculturalists Should Be Mindful of It? In *Multiculturalism: A Critical Reader*. David Theo Goldberg Ed. London: Blackwells.

[Presenter—Christina, Sophia, Cynthia]

**Week 6— Gender, Politics, and Historiography of Ashanti Empire**

**Monday 4 October**

Allman, Jean and Victoria Tashjian. 2000. *I will not eat stone : a women's history of colonial Asante*. Portsmouth, NH : Heinemann ; Oxford [England] : J. Currey.

Rattray, R.S. *Ashanti*.

*Recommended:*

McCaskie, T.C. 2000. *Asante Identities: History and Modernity in an African Village 1850-1950*. London: Edinburgh University Press.

Wilks, Ivor. 2000. Asante nationhood and colonial administrators, 1896-1935. In *Ethnicity in Ghana: the Limits of Invention*. C. Lentz and P. Nugent eds. London: Macmillan.

Jeffries, Richard 1998 The Ghanaian Elections of 1996: Towards the Consolidation of Democracy? *African Affairs*. 97: 387. Pp. 189-208.

**Wednesday 6 October**

Allman, Jean and Victoria Tashjian. 2000. *I will not eat stone : a women's history of colonial Asante*. Portsmouth, NH : Heinemann ; Oxford [England] : J. Currey.

[Presenters—Sarit, Christie]

**Week 7 Pedagogy, Education, and Resistance**

**Monday 11 October FALL BREAK**

**Wednesday 13 October MIDTERM ESSAY HANDED OUT**

Freire, Paulo. 2000. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

**Week 8 Education and Development Discourse in Ghana**

**Monday 18 October**

Escobar, Arturo. 1995. *Encountering Development*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Pp.3-101.

**Wednesday 20 October MIDTERM ESSAY DUE**

Guest Lecture Cati Coe—Ghana, Education, and Culture.

*Recommended:*

Summers, Carol. 2002. *Colonial Lessons: Africans' Education in Southern Rhodesia, 1918-1940*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.

Bastian, Misty. 2000. Young Converts: Christian Missions, Gender, and Youth in Onitsha, Nigeria, 1880-1929. *Anthropological Quarterly* 73(3): 145-158.

Bledsoe, Caroline. 1990. School Fees and the Marriage Process for Mende Girls in Sierra Leone.

In *Beyond the Second Sex: New Directions in the Anthropology of Gender*. Peggy Reeves Sanday

and Ruth Gallagher Goodenough eds. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.  
Bloch, Maurice. 1993. The Uses of Schooling and Literacy in a Zafimaniry village. In *Cross-cultural Approaches to Literacy*. Brian Street ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[Presenters 7 & 8—Ryan, Rebecca]

### **Week 9 Law, Anthropology, and Civil Rights**

#### ***Monday 25 October***

Guest Lecture—Conrad Harper on Brown v. Board of Education

May 17, 1954. Bolling et al v. Sharpe et al. United States Court of Appeals, District of Columbia.

May 17, 1954. Brown et al v. Board of Education of Topeka et al. United States District Court, Kansas.

#### ***Wednesday 27 October***

Povinelli, Elizabeth. 2002. Sex Rites, Civil Rights. In *The Cunning of Recognition*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Hastrup, Kirsten. 2003. Representing the Common Good: The Limits of Legal Language. In *Human Rights in Global Perspective: Anthropological Studies of Rights, Claims and Entitlements*.

Wilson, Richard A. and Jon P. Mitchell eds. Routledge.

[Presenters—Thalia, Julia]

### **Week 10 Media and Democracy?**

#### ***Monday 1 November***

Spitulnik, Debra 2001 The Social Circulation of Media Discourse and the Mediation of Communities. In *Linguistic Anthropology*. A. Duranti ed. London: Blackwell. Pp. 95-118.

McLuhan, Marshall 2002 Medium is the Message. In *The Anthropology of Media*. Kelly Askew and Richard Wilks eds. Oxford: Blackwells. Pp. 18-26.

*Recommended:*

Goankar, Dilip Parameshwar 2002 Towards New Imaginaries: An Introduction. *Public Culture* 14: 1. Pp. 1-19.

West, Harry G. and Jo Ellen Fair 1993 Development Communication and Popular Resistance in Africa: An Examination of the Struggle over Tradition and Modernity through Media. *African Studies Review* 36: 1. Pp. 91-114.

#### ***Wednesday 3 November***

Mamdani, Mahmood ed. 2000. *Beyond rights talk and culture talk : comparative essays on the politics of rights and culture*. New York : St. Martin's Press

*Recommended:*

Meyer, Birgit 1998 The Power of Money: Politics, Occult Forces, and Pentecostalism in Ghana. *African Studies Review*. 41: 3. Pp. 15-37.

[Presenters—Sam, Irina, Tom]

### **Week 11 Speaking and Reconciling: New National Publics in South Africa**

#### ***Monday 8 November***

Coombes, Annie 2003 New Subjectivities for a New Nation. In *History After Apartheid: Visual Culture and Public Memory in a Democratic South Africa*. Durham: Duke University Press. Pp. 243-278.

Ross, Fiona C. 2003. Using rights to measure wrongs: a case study of method and moral in the work of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In *Human Rights in Global Perspective: Anthropological Studies of Rights, Claims and Entitlements*. Wilson, Richard A. and Jon P. Mitchell eds. Routledge.

*Videos: Long Nights Journey into Day. Where the Truth Lies.*

*Recommended:*

Ross, Fiona C. 2001 Speech and Silence: Women's Testimony in the First Five Weeks of Public Hearings of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In *Remaking a World: Violence, Social Suffering, and Recovery*. Veena Das et al eds.. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp. 250-279.

#### ***Wednesday 10 November***

Hip Hop in the Age of Empire: Cape Flats Style. 2003. In *Voices of the Transition: The Politics, Poetics, and Practices of Social Change in South Africa*. Edgar Pieterse & Frank Meintjies eds. Sandown: Heineman.

See <http://www.blackrage.co.za>

[Presenters—Nurina, Rad, Ayan]

## **Week 12 Race, Citizenship, and Violence**

**Monday 15 November**

Guest Lecture—Ruth Moscovitch- Chicago segregation

**Wednesday 17 November**

Mamdani, Mahmood ed. 2000. *Beyond rights talk and culture talk : comparative essays on the politics of rights and culture*. New York : St. Martin's Press.

*Recommended:*

Uvin, Peter. 1999. *Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda*. Bloomfield, Ct.: Kumarian Press Inc.

[Presenters—Alex, Zach]

## **Week 13 Land, Race, and Postcolonial Zimbabwe**

**Monday 22 November**

Guest Lecture Yuka Suzuki

Moore, Donald S. 2000. The Crucible of Cultural Politics: Reworking ‘Development’ in Zimbabwe’s Eastern Highlands. *American Ethnologist* 26(3).

**Wednesday 24 November THANKSGIVING**

## **Week 14 Islam, Spirituality, and Political Change**

**Monday 29 November**

Galvan, Dennis C. 2004. *The State Must Be Our Master of Fire: How Peasants Craft Culturally Sustainable Development in Senegal*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp. 1-32.

Buggenhagen, Beth Ann. 2004. Domestic Object(ion)s: The Senegalise Murid Trade Diaspora and the Politics of Marriage Payments, Love, and State Privatization. In *Producing African Futures: Ritual and Reproduction in a Neoliberal Age*. Brad Weiss ed. Leiden: Brill Press.

Soares, Benjamin. 2004. Muslim Saints in the Age of Neoliberalism. In *Producing African Futures: Ritual and Reproduction in a Neoliberal Age*. Brad Weiss ed. Leiden: Brill Press.

*Recommended:*

Mohammed Saido N’Daou. *Samory Toure*.

**Wednesday 1 December**

Fanon, Frantz. 2004. Algeria Unveiled. In *Decolonization : Perspectives from Now and Then*. Prasnejit Duara. London: Routledge.

Voll, John O. 2004. Islamic Renewal and the ‘Failure of the West.’ In *Decolonization: Perspectives from Now and Then*. Prasnejit Duara. London: Routledge.

[Presenters—Prudence, Chuck, Emma]

## **Week 15 Land, Labor, and The Farce of Law**

**Monday 6 December FINAL PAPERS DUE.**

In Class Film: *The Native That Caused all the Trouble*.

**Wednesday 8 December NO CLASS REGISTRATION DAY**

## **Week 16 Party for Your Right to Fight**

**Monday 13 December- FINAL PRESENTATIONS**

**Wednesday 15 December- FINAL PRESENTATIONS**