

AFRICA RISING? NEW AFRICAN ECONOMIES/CULTURES AND THEIR GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS, II

This course is being taught as part of the African Studies Workshop at Harvard (ASW). It will consist of two components: (i) a public session, to be held every Monday evening at 6.00-8.00, at which a speaker invited from outside the university, a member of the Harvard faculty, or an advanced graduate student will present a pre-circulated paper to an audience similarly composed of faculty, visiting scholars, graduate students, and Africanists from other institutions in the greater Boston area. Each session will include a brief introduction to the paper by its author, a commentary by a discussant, and an open conversation, in which students will be given the floor first for a period, followed by anyone else present; (ii) a graduate seminar component, to be held every Monday at 12.00-1.30 – except for the first session, on Wednesday, September 7, which will be an introductory opening class (see below for details) – at which participants will discuss the paper to be presented on the same evening in the public session, along with relevant readings drawn from the contemporary Africanist canon. While the public sessions of the workshop are intended as a laboratory for international scholarly exchange, the student component aims, in large part, to introduce students to current issues in African Studies across the disciplines.

The theme of the course derives from a story in *The Economist* in 2011 under the title, "Africa Rising." It argued that the continent has come to epitomize both the "transformative promise of [capitalist] growth and its bleakest dimensions. During the spring semester, we shall explore Africa's changing place in the world – and the new economies, legalities, socialities, and cultural forms that have arisen there; this in relation to the papers presented in the public sessions of the ASW. We shall also interrogate the claim that the African present is a foreshadowing of processes beginning to occur elsewhere; that, therefore, it is a productive source of theory about current conditions world-wide.

The theme of the course, *Africa Rising?* – note the addition of the interrogative – is itself part of a broader multi-year program of the ASW, under the rubric *Africa and the World at Large: Or, What the New Global Order Has to Learn from the Contemporary African Experience*. Under this rubric, several major topics will be addressed: (i) Crime, the State, and the Problem of Social Order, (ii) Changing Economies, Changing Politics, Changing Faces of Capitalism, and (iii) Health and Crises of Reproduction.

Participants in the course will be expected to attend each Monday meeting at noon, having read the paper to be presented later that day in the public session; attendance at the evening session is also a requirement. From the second week onward, one or more student(s) in the class will introduce the discussion, while all others will be

expected to come to the meeting having prepared at least one written question to be shared with the class. [We shall divide the labor at the first meeting.] Grades will be determined by class participation and by a term essay based on a reading of one or more of the ASW presentations.

PROGRAM

THERE WILL BE NO CLASS ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, THE FIRST DAY OF THE SEMESTER

9/12 Didier Fassin (Institute of Advanced Studies, Princeton), "From Asylum Seeker to Illegal Migrant – And Vice Versa: Inquiry into a Contemporary Form of Life."

Note: Please read Professor Fassin's paper – which will be available several days in advance on the class website and the website of the Center for African Studies (under "African Studies Workshop"). Since this is the first class of the semester, there will be no student introductions to the paper to be presented that evening, but there will be a general discussion of its content – so please come prepared. At this first session, too, the faculty will introduce the course; there will also be an opportunity for participants to sign up to lead discussions during the semester (see above).

9/19 Françoise Lionnet (Harvard University), "Migration and the Creative Economy."

9/26 Jo Helle-Valle (University of Oslo), "Seduced by Seduction: Being a Man in Botswana."

10/3 Bernard Dubbeld (University of Stellenbosch), "The Future of Home: Post-Apartheid Housing Projects in Glendale."

10/10 COLUMBUS DAY

10/17 Sanyu Majola (University of Colorado), "Navigating Aging, Sexuality, and HIV/AIDS in a rural South African Community."

10/24 Michael McGovern (University of Michigan), "Uncertainty, Trust, and Ebola: Why Some Guineans Have Rejected Public Health Outreach."¹

10/31 Xolela Mangcu (University of Cape Town), "Black Political Modernity in Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century South Africa and the Rise of Nelson Mandela."

¹ Additional readings for this session are to be found at <http://www.culanth.org/fieldsights/585-ebola-in-perspective>.

11/7 Anne-Maria Makhulu (Duke University), "The Ethnography of 'Black Diamonds': Provisional Notes on Black Affluence in South Africa."

11/14 Grieve Chelwa (Harvard University), "Does Economics have an Africa Problem? Some Data and Preliminary Thoughts."

11/21 THANKSGIVING WEEK

11/28 Linda Heywood (Boston University), "From Ndongo/Matamba to Palmares: Enslavement, Resistance and Memory in Brazil."

There are also a few basic texts, available at the Coop, that we ask you to read over the course of the semester – as early in it as possible – since they are likely to feature frequently in our conversations:

Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*

James Ferguson, *Global Shadows*

Janet Roitman, *Fiscal Disobedience*

Jean and John Comaroff, *Theory from the South*