AFRICAN STUDIES

Council on African Studies
The MacMillan Center
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http://african.macmillan.yale.edu
M.A.

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Associate Professors Katharine Baldwin (Political Science), Marie Brault (Public Health), Cécile Fromont (History of Art), Kaveh Khoshnood (Epidemiology), Louisa Lombard (Anthropology), Urania Magriples (Obstetrics, Gynecology, & Reproductive Sciences), LaRon Nelson (Nursing), Sunil Parikh (Public Health; Internal Medicine), Carla Staver (Ecology & Evolutionary Biology), Jonathan Wyrtzen (Sociology)

Assistant Professors Amy Bei (Epidemiology), Jill Jarvis (French), Benedito Machava (History), Hani Mowafi (Emergency Medicine), Christine Ngaruiya (Emergency Medicine), Oluwatosin Onibokun (Obstetrics, Gynecology, & Reproductive Sciences), Nana Osei Quarshie (History), Tracy Rabin (Internal Medicine), Jeremy Schwartz (Internal Medicine), Sheela Shenoi (Internal Medicine), Carla Staver (Ecology & Evolutionary Biology)

Lecturers Adalgisa Caccone (Ecology & Evolutionary Biology), W. Casey King (Public Health), Sarah Ryan (Law), David Simon (Political Science), Veronica Waweru (African Languages)

Senior Lectors Oluseye Adesola (Yorùbá), Jonas Elbousty (Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations), Matuku Ngame (French), Nandipa Sipengane (isiZulu), Kiarie Wa’Njogu (Swahili)
FIELDS OF STUDY

African Studies considers the arts, history, cultures, languages, literatures, politics, religions, and societies of Africa as well as issues concerning development, health, and the environment. Considerable flexibility and choice of areas of concentration are offered because students entering the program may have differing academic backgrounds and career plans. Enrollment in the M.A. program in African Studies provides students with the opportunity to register for the many African studies courses offered in the various departments of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and the professional schools.

The Program in African Studies also offers two interdisciplinary seminars to create dialogue and to integrate approaches across disciplines. In addition to the M.A. degree program, the Council on African Studies offers students in the University’s doctoral and other professional degree programs the chance to obtain a Graduate Certificate of Concentration in African Studies by fulfilling a supplementary curriculum. (See Council on African Studies, under Non-Degree Granting Programs, Councils, and Research Institutes.) Joint degrees are possible with the approval of the director of graduate studies (DGS) and the relevant officials in the schools of the Environment, Law, Management, and Public Health.

The African collections of the Yale libraries together represent one of the largest holdings on Africa found in North America. The University now possesses more than 220,000 volumes including, but not limited to, government documents, art catalogs, photographs, manuscripts, correspondence, and theses, many published in Africa.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE M.A. DEGREE

The Yale University Master of Arts degree program in African Studies was instituted in 1986. The two-year interdisciplinary, graduate-level curriculum is intended for students who will later continue in a Ph.D. program or a professional school, or for those who will enter business, government service, or another career in which a sound knowledge of Africa is essential or valuable. A student may choose one of the following areas of concentration: history; anthropology; political science; sociology; arts and literatures; languages and linguistics; religion; environmental and development studies; and public health.

The program requires sixteen courses: one compulsory interdisciplinary seminar, Gateway to Africa (AFST 505); a second course employing an interdisciplinary approach to African Studies, approved by the DGS; four courses of instruction in an African language; four courses in one of the foregoing areas of concentration; four other approved courses offered in the Graduate School or professional schools; and two terms of directed reading and research (AFST 590 and AFST 900) during which students will complete the required thesis; with permission of the DGS, AFST 951 may be substituted for AFST 590. A student who is able to demonstrate advanced proficiency in an African language may have the language requirement waived and substitute four other approved courses. The choice of courses must be approved by the DGS, with whom students should consult as soon as possible in the first term.
**THE MASTER’S THESIS**
The master’s thesis is based on research on a topic approved by the DGS and advised by a faculty member with expertise or specialized competence in the chosen topic. Students must submit their thesis for joint evaluation by the adviser and a second reader.

**PROGRAM IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES**
The language program offers instruction in five major languages from sub-Saharan Africa: Kiswahili (eastern and central Africa), Twi, Wolof, Yorùbá (West Africa), and isiZulu (southern Africa). Language-related courses and language courses for professionals are also offered. African language courses emphasize communicative competence, and instructors use multimedia materials that focus on the contemporary African context. Course sequences are designed to enable students to achieve advanced competence in all skill areas by the end of the third year, and the African Languages program encourages students to spend one summer or term in Africa during their language study.

Noncredited instruction in other African languages is available by application through the Directed Independent Language Study program at the Center for Language Study. Contact the director of the Program in African Languages.

More information is available on the program’s website, http://african.macmillan.yale.edu.

**COURSES**

**AFST 527a / HSAR 527a, Critical Approaches to African Art**  Cecile Fromont
A reading seminar taking an interdisciplinary approach to foundational texts in and for the history of African art and expressive cultures, on the continent and its diaspora, in dialogue with recent scholarship and museum exhibitions. Special emphasis is given to scholarship connected to collections in permanent and temporary exhibitions in and around New Haven.

**AFST 570a, Foreign Assistance to Sub-Saharan Africa: Archival Data Analysis**  Russell Barbour
This course reviews the many years of U.S. development assistance to Africa using archival data from the Agency for International Development (USAID), nonprofit organizations, and specialized agencies such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture and nineteen U.S. government agencies involved in development assistance to Africa. Students analyze the effectiveness, perception, and shifting development paradigms of such assistance, looking at four specific areas: agriculture, water and sanitation, child survival, and refugee relief. Advanced text-mining analysis in the R package tm and web-scraping algorithms in Python are applied to both archival and current data to enhance analysis.

**AFST 697a / ANTH 697a, Migration and Transnationalism in the Muslim World**  Leslie Gross-Wyrten
This advanced/graduate seminar is an introduction in three respects: first, it provides an overview of the various experiences of mobility (and immobility) studied by ethnographers of migration and the issues or questions that emerge from these studies. Second, the course explores multiple geographies and imagined communities
categorized as “Muslim” to understand how movement continually shapes not only these geographies and communities but also those labeled “non-Muslim.” Finally, this course represents a diverse range of methodological approaches, quandaries, and concerns that “doing migration ethnography” engenders, especially grappling with questions of anthropology and geography’s entanglements with colonialism and white supremacy. Through these studies, we explore how identities are formed and reformed, how citizenship is performed or denied, how spaces are made and struggled over, how people get stuck or cut loose, and how home is lost and remade. Fundamental to these explorations are questions of identity and belonging expressed through registers of race, religion and gender.

AFST 836a / HIST 836a, Histories of Postcolonial Africa: Themes, Genres, and the Contingencies of Archival Research  Benedito Machava
This course is both historiographic and methodological. It is meant as an introduction to the major themes that have dominated the study of postcolonial Africa in recent years, and the material circumstances in which they were produced. We pay close attention to the kinds of sources and archives that scholars have employed in their works, and how they addressed the challenges of writing contemporary histories in Africa. We center our weekly meetings around one key text and one or two supplementary readings. We engage with works on politics, detention, violence, environment and technology, women and gender, affect, fashion, leisure, and popular culture.

AFST 837b / HIST 837b, Decolonization and Independence in Africa  Robert Harms
This seminar looks at the process of decolonization in twentieth-century Africa and explores some of the major political, economic, and cultural forces that influenced the trajectories of independent African countries.

AFST 839a / HIST 839a, Environmental History of Africa  Robert Harms
An examination of the interaction between people and their environment in Africa and the ways in which this interaction has affected or shaped the course of African history.

AFST 885a / CPLT 735a / FREN 885a, Modern French Poetry in the Maghreb  Thomas Connolly
A survey of nineteenth-, twentieth-, and twenty-first-century poetry written in French by authors from North Africa, including works by Si Mohand, Amrouche, Kateb, Khaïr-Eddine, Sénaç, Laâbi, Khatibi, Farès, Djaout, Dib, Ben Jelloun, Meddeb, Labbize, and Acherchour. Includes close readings set in literary, artistic, linguistic, aesthetic, historical, political, religious, and philosophical contexts. This iteration of the course coincides with the publication of a new double issue of Yale French Studies entitled “North African Poetry in French” (2020). Includes invited specialists. Readings in French, discussion in English. Prerequisite: reading knowledge of French.

AFST 889a / CPLT 889a / ENGL 889a, Postcolonial Ecologies  Cajetan Iheka
This seminar examines the intersections of postcolonialism and ecocriticism as well as the tensions between these conceptual nodes, with readings drawn from across the global South. Topics of discussion include colonialism, development, resource extraction, globalization, ecological degradation, nonhuman agency, and indigenous cosmologies. The course is concerned with the narrative strategies affording the illumination of environmental ideas. We begin by engaging with the questions of postcolonial and world literature and return to these throughout the semester as
we read primary texts, drawn from Africa, the Caribbean, and Asia. We consider African ecologies in their complexity from colonial through post-colonial times. In the unit on the Caribbean, we take up the transformations of the landscape from slavery, through colonialism, and the contemporary era. Turning to Asian spaces, the seminar explores changes brought about by modernity and globalization as well as the effects on both humans and nonhumans. Readings include the writings of Zakes Mda, Aminatta Forna, Helon Habila, Derek Walcott, Jamaica Kincaid, Ishimure Michiko, and Amitav Ghosh. The course prepares students to respond to key issues in postcolonial ecocriticism and the environmental humanities, analyze the work of the major thinkers in the fields, and examine literary texts and other cultural productions from a postcolonial perspective. Course participants have the option of selecting from a variety of final projects. Students can craft an original essay that analyzes primary text from a postcolonial and/or ecocritical perspective. Such work should aim at producing new insight on a theoretical concept and/or the cultural text. They can also produce an undergraduate syllabus for a course at the intersection of postcolonialism and environmentalism or write a review essay discussing two recent monographs focused on postcolonial ecocriticism.

SWAH 610a, Beginning Kiswahili I  John Wa’Njogu
A beginning course with intensive training and practice in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Initial emphasis is on the spoken language and conversation. Credit only on completion of SWAH 620.

SWAH 620b, Beginning Kiswahili II  John Wa’Njogu
Continuation of SWAH 610. Texts provide an introduction to the basic structure of Kiswahili and to the culture of the speakers of the language. Prerequisite: SWAH 610.

SWAH 630a, Intermediate Kiswahili I  Veronica Waweru
Further development of speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Prepares students for further work in literary, language, and cultural studies as well as for a functional use of Kiswahili. Study of structure and vocabulary is based on a variety of texts from traditional and popular culture. Emphasis on command of idiomatic usage and stylistic nuance. Prerequisite: SWAH 620.

SWAH 640b, Intermediate Kiswahili II  Veronica Waweru
Continuation of SWAH 630.

SWAH 650a, Advanced Kiswahili I  John Wa’Njogu
Development of fluency through readings and discussions on contemporary issues in Kiswahili. Introduction to literary criticism in Kiswahili. Materials include Kiswahili oral literature, prose, poetry, and plays, as well as texts drawn from popular and political culture. Prerequisite: SWAH 640.

SWAH 660b, Advanced Kiswahili II  John Wa’Njogu
Continuation of SWAH 650.

SWAH 670a, Topics in Kiswahili Literature  John Wa’Njogu
Advanced readings and discussion with emphasis on literary and historical texts. Reading assignments include materials on Kiswahili prose, plays, poetry, Kiswahili dialects, and the history of the language.
YORU 610a, Beginning Yorùbá I  Oluseye Adesola
Training and practice in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Initial emphasis is on the spoken aspect, with special attention to unfamiliar consonantal sounds, nasal vowels, and tone, using isolated phrases, set conversational pieces, and simple dialogues. Multimedia materials provide audio practice and cultural information. Credit only on completion of YORU 620.

YORU 620b, Beginning Yorùbá II  Oluseye Adesola
Continuing practice in using and recognizing tone through dialogues. More emphasis is placed on simple cultural texts and role playing. Prerequisite: YORU 610.

YORU 630a, Intermediate Yorùbá I  Oluseye Adesola
Refinement of speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. More natural texts are provided to prepare students for work in literary, language, and cultural studies as well as for a functional use of Yorùbá. Prerequisite: YORU 620.

YORU 640b, Intermediate Yorùbá II  Oluseye Adesola
Students are exposed to more idiomatic use of the language in a variety of interactions, including occupational, social, religious, and educational. Cultural documents include literary and nonliterary texts. Prerequisite: YORU 630.

YORU 650a, Advanced Yorùbá I  Oluseye Adesola
An advanced course intended to improve aural and reading comprehension as well as speaking and writing skills. Emphasis is on acquiring a command of idiomatic usage and stylistic nuance. Study materials include literary and nonliterary texts; social, political, and popular entertainment media such as video movies and recorded poems (*ewi*); and music. Prerequisite: YORU 640.

YORU 660b, Advanced Yorùbá II  Oluseye Adesola
Continuing development of aural and reading comprehension, and speaking and writing skills, with emphasis on idiomatic usage and stylistic nuance. Study materials are selected to reflect research interests of the students. Prerequisite: YORU 650.

YORU 670a, Topics in Yorùbá Literature and Culture  Oluseye Adesola
The course provides students with the opportunity to acquire Yorùbá up to the superior level. It is designed to give an in-depth discussion on advanced readings on Yorùbá literature and culture. It focuses on Yorùbá history, poetry, novels, dramas, and oral folklore. It also seeks to uncover the basics of the Yorùbá culture in communities where Yorùbá is spoken across the globe, with particular emphasis on Nigeria. It examines movies, texts, and written literature to gain insight into the Yorùbá philosophy and ways of life.

ZULU 610a, Beginning isiZulu I  Nandipa Sipengane
A beginning course in conversational isiZulu, using web-based materials filmed in South Africa. Emphasis on the sounds of the language, including clicks and tonal variation, and on the words and structures needed for initial social interaction. Brief dialogues concern everyday activities; aspects of contemporary Zulu culture are introduced through readings and documentaries in English. Credit only on completion of ZULU 620.
ZULU 620b, Beginning isiZulu II  Nandipa Sipengane
Development of communication skills through dialogues and role play. Texts and songs are drawn from traditional and popular literature and songs. Students research daily life in selected areas of South Africa. Prerequisite: ZULU 610.

ZULU 630a, Intermediate isiZulu I  Nandipa Sipengane
Development of basic fluency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing isiZulu, using web-based materials filmed in South Africa. Students describe and narrate spoken and written paragraphs. Review of morphology; concentration on tense and aspect. Materials are drawn from contemporary popular culture, folklore, and mass media. Prerequisite: ZULU 620.

ZULU 640b, Intermediate isiZulu II  Nandipa Sipengane
Students read longer texts from popular media as well as myths and folktales. Students are prepared for initial research involving interaction with speakers of isiZulu in South Africa, and for the study of oral and literary genres. Prerequisite: ZULU 630.

ZULU 650a, Advanced isiZulu I  Nandipa Sipengane
Development of fluency in using idioms, speaking about abstract concepts, and voicing preferences and opinions. Excerpts are drawn from oral genres, short stories, and dramas made for television. Introduction to other South African languages and to issues of standardization, dialect, and language attitude. Prerequisite: ZULU 640.

ZULU 660b, Advanced isiZulu II  Nandipa Sipengane
Readings may include short stories, a novel, praise poetry, historical texts, or contemporary political speeches, depending on student interests. Study of issues of language policy and use in contemporary South Africa; introduction to the Soweto dialect of isiZulu. Students are prepared for extended research in South Africa involving interviews with isiZulu speakers. Prerequisite: ZULU 650.