

Geography 243
Geography of Africa: Local Resources and Livelihoods in a Global Context¹
Spring Semester, 2020

Class Time and Location: 9:40-11:10, Tuesdays & Thursdays, Rm 107, Carnegie Hall

Instructor: Bill Moseley

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Office Hours: 1:15-2:15 MTWR, or by appointment

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Teaching Assistants:

Sophia Alhadeff (salhadeff@macalester.edu), 7-9pm Wed, 104 Carnegie (Geography lounge)

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Course Description and Objectives

From the positive images in the film *Black Panther*, to the derogatory remarks of President Trump, the African continent often figures prominently in our collective imagination. This class goes beyond the superficial media interpretations of the world's second largest region to complicate and ground our understanding of this fascinating continent. Africa South of the Sahara has long been depicted in the media as a place of crisis – a region of the world often known for civil strife, disease, corruption, hunger and environmental destruction. This perception is not entirely unfounded, after all, Ebola in west and central Africa, the kidnapping of school girls in northern Nigeria, or civil war and hunger in Somalia are known problems. Yet Africa is a place of extraordinarily diverse, vibrant, and dynamic cultures. Many Africans also expertly manage their natural resources, are brilliant agriculturalists and have traditions of democratic governance at the local level. As such, the African story is extremely diverse and varied. The thoughtful student must work hard to go beyond the superficial media interpretations of the vast African continent and appreciate its many realities without succumbing to a romanticized view. As geographers, we will place contemporary African developments in a historical and global context. Africa has a long history of influencing and being influenced by the outside world. Among other issues, we will explore how colonialism, and even more recent 'development' initiatives, have influenced current structures in Africa. Furthermore, we will examine what restrictions, if any, the current world economic system places on development possibilities for the continent.

The course provides a basic background in African history and bio-physical environments, leading to discussion of advanced topics in contemporary African studies. We will cover a broad range of sectoral themes, including: health and population dynamics; food and agriculture; cities and urbanization; rural life; parks and peoples; development and underdevelopment; politics and governance; and sociocultural geography and music. This course fulfills the argumentative writing (WA) requirement.

¹ This course counts toward the geography major, the African studies concentration, the international development concentration, Food, Agriculture & Society concentration, the internationalism requirement, Argumentative Writing (WA) requirement, and the social science distribution requirement.

Format and Communication

The class will meet twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The class will be conducted with both lectures and in-class discussions. Students are expected to have done all assigned reading before coming to class, and be prepared to discuss it. In addition to normal classroom banter, we will have several designated discussion days during the term (see schedule). This is your class, and I want to know how it's going. Please let me know if you would like to see changes, from lecture topics to grading. You are welcome to speak with me after class or to visit me in my office. The surest way to contact me is to send me e-mail (moseley@macalester.edu), which normally will be responded to promptly during regular business hours.

Disabilities

If you have a documented disability, or any other problem you think may affect your ability to perform well in this class, please see me early in the semester so that arrangements may be made to accommodate you.

Health and Wellness

You are encouraged to make your health and well-being a priority throughout this semester and during your career at Macalester. Taking care of yourself will help you engage more fully in your academic experience. Remember that beyond being a student, you are a human being carrying your own experiences, thoughts, emotions, and identities with you. It is important to acknowledge any stressors you may be facing, which can be mental, emotional, physical, cultural, financial, etc., and how they can have an impact on your academic experience. I encourage you to remember that you have a body with needs. In the classroom, eat when you are hungry, drink water, use the restroom, and step out if you are upset and need some air. Please do what is necessary so long as it does not impede your or others' ability to be mentally and emotionally present in the course. Outside of the classroom, sleeping, moving your body, and connecting with others can be strategies to help you be resilient at Macalester. If you are having difficulties maintaining your well-being, please don't hesitate to contact me and/or find support from Health & Wellness Center. I have included contact information for health and wellness resources on the course moodle page.

Academic Misconduct

Plagiarism and cheating are both academic crimes. Never (1) turn in an assignment that you did not write yourself, (2) turn in an assignment for this class that you previously turned in for another class, or (3) cheat on an exam. If you do so, it may result in a failing grade for the class, and possibly even suspension from the college. Please see me if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism. Anyone caught cheating on an exam will be reported to the provost in line with recognized college procedures.

Texts

- 1) Grant, Richard. 2015. *Africa: Geographies of Change*. New York: Oxford University Press (ISBN 978-0-19-992056-3)
- 2) Moseley, W.G. (ed.) 2012. *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on African Issues*. 4th Edition. Dubuque, IA: McGraw-Hill. (ISBN 978-0-07-805008-4)
- 3) Spindel, Carol. 1989. *In the Shadow of the Sacred Grove*. New York: Vintage Books (ISBN: 0-679-72214-9) (this book is out of print and is available via the course moodle site).

Some readings are on the course moodle site (see reading list below). Handouts will be distributed from time to time in class. The instructor is not responsible for providing handouts for students who are absent from class.

Assignments/Exams

Reading: Reading assignments related to course lectures are listed on the outline of topics that follows. Information from the textbook supplements lecture and forms the basis of a two-way class dialog. Readings for discussion days are listed separately below.

Participation and Discussion days: The course will be oriented towards discussion for roughly one quarter of class time (see schedule). The purpose of the discussion classes is to facilitate critical analysis and lively dialog on controversial issues related to African studies. I have organized discussions around a key set of issues in African Studies with pairs of readings representing contrasting viewpoints on each topic. While no issue in African studies has a simple yes or no answer, discussion readings have been organized as such to encourage debate and, hopefully, accelerate your heart rate.

The majority of class participation points will be derived from your comments in discussion and from your competence as a student discussion leader. A few participation points will also be derived from my assessment of your participation in the lecture sessions (based on cogency of comments, questions, and answers to questions). Participation points are relatively easy to obtain if you keep up with the reading and speak up during discussion. Please see me if you have difficulty speaking in class. Student discussion leaders will be assigned to facilitate these sessions. In my opinion, the best discussions are those in which: 1) students listen (and learn) from one another and build on what each other is saying; 2) the discussion is focused on understanding the main argument of each reading and breaking down and analyzing this argument to see if it makes sense; 3) making connections between readings (when several are assigned on the same day) by identifying where authors agree and disagree; and 4) relating insight gained from reading and discussion to other texts or real life events. In sum, I want you to approach discussion as an on-going scholarly debate in which we (as a community of scholars and learners) are attempting to advance our collective knowledge.

Reaction essays: Reaction essays are brief essays (1-2 page or 550-650 words) in which you respond to three or more assigned readings for a given discussion. Your essays should include a succinct but detailed summary of the argument(s) to which you are responding & develop your reaction, which may be one of skepticism, all out agreement or disagreement, epiphany, or whole-hearted endorsement. Regardless, your essay should exhibit a line of reflective thought in which you explain the logic & rationale that supports your reaction to the reading(s). Your essays must include at least one question, relevant to the readings, which you would like to ask of your classmates. Thus, the reaction essays should help you prepare for participation in class discussion of the readings. Reaction are submitted via Moodle. The essays are due by 10 pm the day before a discussion. You are required to complete seven essays and have eight opportunities to write them. Each essay is worth .71% of your grade. Proof read your essays so that they are free of grammatical and spelling errors. The essays are marked in in terms of three levels: excellent, satisfactory or non-satisfactory. Reaction essays submitted late will receive no credit.

Map quizzes: Two map quizzes will be given during the semester. The first will cover physical geography (lakes, mountains, vegetative cover, etc) while the second will cover certain aspects of human geography (countries, languages, major cities, etc). Study guides will be given out.

Africanist geographer profile: In order to gain a better understanding of how geographers have gone about investigating issues in Africa, students will write a five page paper reviewing the career and writings of a geographer whose work is (largely) Africa related. Ideally you will select a geographer who does research on a topic (or uses techniques) that are of interest to you. Such geographers may be deceased or living, based in the US or abroad, faculty or research scientists. In writing this paper you may wish to: locate the scholar's cv/resume on-line, interview the person in question (if they are alive), review some of their publications, read other people's reviews of their publications, and assess how their ideas have contributed to broader understanding in the field. Guidelines for this paper will be distributed well in advance of the due date, as well as suggestions for identifying scholars who may be of interest.

Final Project - Regional Development Analysis: The class will be divided into 4 groups who will work individually and collectively to assemble a development assessment and action plan for a major region of Sub-Saharan Africa: 1) Sahelian West Africa, 2) Coastal West Africa, 3) Central Africa, 4) Horn of Africa, 5) East Africa, or 6) Southern Africa. Each report will be composed of an executive summary penned by the group (five double-spaced pages in length), followed by four chapters – each authored by an individual student in the group (15-20 double spaced pages in length). Each of these chapters should cover a specific development sector for the region such as health/population, education, agriculture, environment, politics/governance, urban development, commercial development, etc. Chapter authors should review the main development challenges in a specific sector for the region, and then focus on one or two issues and how they might best be addressed. More specific guidelines will be distributed in class.

Final Project Presentation: Each group (4-5 students per group) will make a 30 minute presentation of their regional development assessment during the final exam period.

Midterms: Two midterms will be given, each covering material from one half of the term. Exams will be about 1/5th multiple choice and 4/5ths essay questions. Make-up exams will only be given in the event of illness or other verifiable emergency. In the event of an absence during an exam or quiz, it is the student's responsibility to contact me no later than one (1) class period after the test date.

Grading and Exams

<u>Grade Components</u>		Reg'l dev't policy draft (4/22):	2%
First Midterm (3/10):	22%	Reg'l dev't policy peer review (4/25-27):	1%
Second Midterm (4/30):	22%	Reg'l dev't policy report (5/4):	20%
Map quiz 1 (2/11):	3.5%	Group presentation (5/7):	5%
Map quiz 2 (3/31):	3.5%	Participation and discussion leadership:	9%
Africanist geographer profile (2/28):	7%	<u>Reaction essays:</u>	5%
		Total:	100%

Final grades are based on a weighted average for the term. Grade cutoff points (in terms of percentage) are as follows: A = 93-100%; A- = 90-92%; B+ = 87-89%; B = 83-86%; B- = 80-82%; C+ = 77-79%; C = 73-76%; C- = 70-72%; D+ = 67-69%; D = 63-66%; D- = 60-62%, NC = < 60%.

Tentative Schedule and Assigned Readings For Lectures

Please note that this is tentative and subject to change. It is your responsibility to keep up with any modifications. All lecture-related readings are in Africa: Geographies of Change, unless otherwise noted.

Wk	Dates	Lecture and Discussion Topics		Lecture Readings /assignment due dates
		Tuesday	Thursday	
1	23 Jan		Introduction to the Course	
2	28-30 Jan	Lecture: Intro to African Geography	Lecture: Physical geography of Africa	Chap 1-3; preface and intro chap in <i>Taking sides</i>
		Lecture: Physical geography of Africa		
3	4-6 Feb	Lecture: Africa in historical perspective	Lecture: Africa in historical perspective	Chap 4; Select geographer for paper #1 by Fri, 2/7 @4pm
			<u>Discussion 1: Africa in Historical and Global</u>	
4	11-13 Feb	Map quiz 1: Physical Geography	Lecture: Agriculture & livelihoods	Chap 5,10
		Lecture: Agriculture & Livelihoods	<u>Discussion 2: Agriculture</u>	
5	18-20 Feb	Film about anti-Apartheid struggle: "Amandla: A Revolution in Four Part Harmony"	Lecture: land tenure and reform	
6	25-27 Feb	Lecture: Village life & time geography	Lecture : Population debates, dynamics and health	Chap 9; Africanist geog profile due Fri, 2/28 @ 4pm
		<u>Discussion 3: Village life</u>		
7	3-5 Mar	Lecture: Population dynamics and health	<u>Discussion 4: Population debates, dynamics & health</u>	Final paper proposal due Fri, 3/6 @4pm on moodle
8	10-12 Mar	Midterm exam	Library Session for final paper (Library Rm 206)	
9	17-19 Mar	Spring break		
10	24-26 Mar	Lecture: environmental issues	Lecture: environmental issues	Chap 8,11
			<u>Discussion 5: Human-Environment Interactions</u>	
11	31 Mar – 2 April	Map quiz 2: political geography	Lecture: Development and Underdevelopment	Cha 6,12
		Lecture: Urban Economies		
12	7-9 April	Film: Black Panther	<u>Discussion 6: Development</u>	
13	14-16 April	Lecture: Political Geography	<u>Discussion 7: Political Geography</u>	
14	21-23 April	Lecture: socio-cultural geography and music	<u>Discussion 8: Socio-cultural geography</u>	Final Paper draft due Wed, 4/22 @4pm; peer review Sat-Mon (4/25-27)
15	28-30 April	Exam review session and course evaluations	Final exam in class	
16	4-7 May	Monday, May 4, Final Project due @4pm	Thurs, 5/7, Presentations during final exam period (8-10am)	

Discussion Reading Schedule

Note: All discussion readings are in Taking Sides: Clashing Views on African Issues, 4th ed. (unless otherwise noted by **).

1) Thursday, Feb 6: Africa in historical and global perspective

ISSUE 1. Did the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Underdevelop Africa?

YES: Paul Lovejoy, from “The Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on Africa: A Review of the Literature,” *Journal of African History* (1989)

NO: John Thornton, from “Chapter 3: Slavery and African Social Structure,” *Africa and the Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1680* (1992)

ISSUE 3: Is European Subjugation of Africans Ultimately Explained by Differences in Land, Plant and Animal Resources?

YES: Jared Diamond, from “Why Europeans were the ones to colonize Sub-Saharan Africa.” *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies.*(1999)

NO: Lucy Jarosz, from “A Human Geographer’s Response to Guns, Germs and Steel: The Case of Agrarian Development and Change in Madagascar.” *Antipode* (2003)

ISSUE 4. Did Colonialism Distort Contemporary African Development?

YES: Marcus Colchester, from “Slave and Enclave: Towards a Political Ecology of Equatorial Africa,” *The Ecologist* (1993)

NO: Robin M. Grier, from “Colonial Legacies and Economic Growth,” *Public Choice* (1999)

2) Thursday, February 13: Agricultural Development and Food Security

ISSUE 2: Have the Contributions of Africans Been Recognized for Developing New World Agriculture?

YES: Richard Schulze, “The Rise and Fall of Carolina Gold,” *Carolina Gold Rice* (2005) (moodle**)

NO: Judith Carney, from “Agroenvironments and Slave Strategies in the Diffusion of Rice Culture to the Americas.” *Political Ecology: An Integrative Approach to Geography and Environment-Development Studies* (2003)

ISSUE 11: Does African Agriculture Need a Green Revolution?

YES: Kofi Annan, from “Remarks on the Launch of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa at the World Economic Forum.” (2007)

NO: Carol Thompson. “Africa: Green Revolution or Rainbow Revolution.” *Foreign Policy in Focus* (2007)

Is it time for non-market based land reform in South Africa?

YES: Ntsebeza, L. 2018. “This Land is our Land.” *Foreign Policy*. May 3. (**moodle**)

NO: Du Toit, A. 2018. “The land question is also about political belonging.” *The Daily Maverick*. August 27. (**moodle**)

Editorial board. 2018. “Trump’s Vile Ploy on South Africa.” *New York Times*, August 23 (**moodle**)

3) Tuesday, Feb 25, Village Life

In the Shadow of the Sacred Grove (all chapters) (moodle**)

4) Thursday, March 5: Population Debates, Dynamics and Health.

ISSUE 10. Is Food Production in Africa Capable of Keeping Up With Population Growth?

YES: Michael Mortimore and Mary Tiffen, from “Population and Environment in Time Perspective: The Machakos Story,” *People and Environment in Africa* (1995)

NO: John Murton, from “Population Growth and Poverty in Machakos District, Kenya,” *The Geographical Journal* (1999)

ISSUE 15: Is the International Community Focusing on HIV/AIDS Treatment at the Expense of Prevention in Africa?

YES: Andrew Creese et al. “Cost-Effectiveness of HIV/AIDS Interventions in Africa: A Systematic Review of the Evidence. *The Lancet* (2002)

NO: Philip Hilt. “Changing Minds: Botswana Beats Back AIDS.” *Rx for Survival: Why We Must Rise to the Global Challenge* (2005)

***Did our stereotypes about African disease exacerbate the West African Ebola crisis?*

YES: Seay, L. and K.Yi Dionne. 2014. “The long and ugly tradition of treating Africa as a dirty, diseased place.” Monkey Cage Blog. Washington Post. August 25. (**moodle**); West, J. and T. McDonnell. 2014.

“We Are Making Ebola Outbreaks Worse by Cutting Down Forests.” Mother Jones Magazine. July 7. (**moodle**);

NO: Flynn, Gerard and Susan Scutti. 2014. “Smuggled Bushmeat Is Ebola's Back Door to America.” Newsweek. Aug 21. (<http://www.newsweek.com/2014/08/29/smuggled-bushmeat-ebolas-back-door-america-265668.html>)

5) Thursday, March 26, Human-Environment Interactions

ISSUE 9. Is Climate Change a Major Driver of Agricultural Shifts in Africa?

YES: Pradeep Kurukulasuriya et al., from “Will African Agriculture Survive Climate Change?” World Bank Economic Review (2006)

NO: Ole Mertz, Cheikh Mbow, Anette Reenberg and Awa Diouf, from “Farmers’ Perceptions of Climate Change and Agricultural Adaptation Strategies in Rural Sahel,” *Environmental Management* (2009)

ISSUE 12: Is Community Based Wildlife Management a Failed Approach?

YES: Peter Balint and Judith Mashinya, from “The decline of a model community-based conservation project: Governance, capacity and devolution in Mahenye, Zimbabwe,” *Geoforum* (2006)

NO: Liz Rihoy, Chaka Chirozva and Simon Anstey, from “‘People are Not Happy’: Crisis Adaptation and Resilience in Zimbabwe’s CAMPFIRE Programme,” in Fred Nelson, ed. *Community Rights, Conservation & Contested Land: The Politics of Natural Resource Governance in Africa*. Washington (Earthscan, 2010)

6) Thursday, April 9: Development and Underdevelopment

ISSUE 5. Have Free Market Policies Worked for Africa?

YES: Fudzai Pamacheche and Baboucarr Koma, from “Privatization in Sub-Saharan Africa - an essential route to poverty alleviation,” *Africa Integration Review* (2007)

NO: Thandika Mkandawire, from “The Global Economic Context,” in Ben Wisner, Camilla Toulmin, and Rutendo Chitiga, eds., *Towards a New Map of Africa* (Earthscan, 2005)

***Does the contemporary film Black Panther fundamentally change the way we think about African Development?*

YES: Orr, C. 2018. "Black Panther is more than a superhero movie." *The Atlantic*. Feb 16. (**moodle**)

NO: Essa, A. 2018. "We've been duped. Black Panther is anti-revolution." *Independent Online (IOL) News*. Feb 21. (**moodle**)

ISSUE 7. Is Increasing Chinese Investment Good for African Development?

YES: Barry Sautman and Yan Hairong, from "Friends and Interests: China's Distinctive Links with Africa," *African Studies Review* (2007)

NO: Pdraig Carmody and Francis Owusu, from "Competing Hegemons? Chinese versus American Geo-Economic Strategies in Africa," *Political Geography* (2007)

7) Thursday, April 16, Political Geography

ISSUE 17: Does Increased Female Participation Substantially Change African Politics?

YES: Elizabeth Powley, from "Rwanda: Women Hold Up Half the Parliament," in Julie Ballington and Azza Karam, eds. *Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers* (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2009)

NO: Carey Leigh Hogg, from "Women's Political Representation in Post-Genocide Rwanda: A Politics of Inclusion or Exclusion?" *Journal of International Women's Studies* (November, 2009)

Issue 18: Is Corruption the Result of Poor African Leadership?

YES: R. Rotberg, from "The Roots of Africa's Leadership Deficit," *Center for Public Leadership* (2003)

NO: Arthur A. Goldsmith, from "Risk, Rule, and Reason: Leadership in Africa," *Public Administration and Development* (2001)

***Is the increasing combination of development and humanitarian assistance with anti-terrorism objectives in Africa an inevitable necessity?*

YES: Miles, W.F.S. 2012. "Deploying Development to Counter-Terrorism: Post 9/11 Transformation of US Foreign Aid to Africa." *African Studies Review*. 55(3): 27-60. (**moodle**)

NO: Moseley, W.G. 2009. "Stop the Blanket Militarization of Humanitarian Aid." *Foreign Policy*. July 31. (**moodle**)

8) Thursday, April 23: Social Issues and Gender

ISSUE 13. Should Female Genital Cutting Be Accepted as a Cultural Practice?

YES: Fuambai Ahmadu, from "Rites and Wrongs: Excision and Power among Kono Women of Sierra Leone," in B. Shell-Duncan and Y. Hernlund, eds., *Female 'Circumcision' Africa: Culture, Controversy, and Change* (2001)

NO: Population Reference Bureau, from "Abandoning Female Genital Cutting: Prevalence, Attitudes, and Efforts to End the Practice," *A Report of the Population Reference Bureau* (2001)

Richard A. Shweder, from "What About 'Female Genital Mutilation'? And Why Understanding Culture Matters in the First Place," *Daedalus* (2000) (moodle**).

ISSUE 14. Are Women in a Position to Challenge Male Power Structures in Africa?

YES: Rick Schroeder, from *Shady Practices: Agroforestry and Gender Politics in The Gambia* (1999)

NO: Human Rights Watch, from "Double Standards: Women's Property Rights Violations in Kenya," *A Report of Human Rights Watch* (2003)

Welcome to the course! I look forward to working with you this semester.