

**The University of Arizona
Humanities Seminars**

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**AFRICAN FREEDOM
Spring 2018**

Course description: This course will explore the emergence of freedom as an ideal in Africa during and after the movements for national liberation. We will examine the people's ongoing struggle to achieve social justice after colonial independence as a quest for meaningful freedom. To understand the emergence of this ideal and the nature of the people's struggle we will consider complex narratives (film, fiction) of major importance and read social theory (history, economics, sociology). The historical period covered is 1950s to present and the geographical scope is pan-African. Areas of narrative interest include introspective gaze and intimate self; gender dynamics; national experience; globalization; spiritual realm. The course is designed to be one coherent argument about the emerging ideal of freedom in Africa after national liberation in which each week builds on the previous. This will provide a solid foundation for lifelong learning and exploration of the universal value of freedom from ancient Greece to 21st-century Africa. Offered in a lecture format with keynote presentations.

Meetings: *Wednesday, 1-3:00 pm, Poetry Center.*

Required materials: will be available at UA Bookstore in mid December; also widely available on Amazon

Ayi Kwei Armah, *Fragments*, (novel) Heinemann, 1995. ISBN: 978-0435901547 or Per Ankh edition, 2006. ISBN: 978-2911928109. Either edition will work.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, (novel). Algonquin Books; reprint 2012. ISBN: 978-1616202415.

Sony Labou Tansi, *Life and a Half* (novel). Indiana UP, 2011. ISBN: 978-0253222879.

Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, (novel). Penguin, 1994. ISBN: 978-0385474542.

Required materials: will be uploaded to Box@UA the link of which will be shared with registered students

Phyllis Taoua, *African Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming 2018)

Kwame Nkrumah, speeches

Patrice Lumumba, speeches

Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (excerpts)

Orlando Patterson, *Freedom in the Making of Western Culture* (excerpts)

Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (excerpts)

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (excerpts)

Fred Cooper, *Africa Since 1940* (excerpts)

Geoff Eley, "Historicizing the Global"

James Ferguson, *Global Shadows* (excerpts)

Scenes from these films to be discussed

Jihan El-Tahri, *Cuba: An African Odyssey* (documentary film)

Robert Nugent, *End of the Rainbow*, (documentary film)

Idrissa Mora K'pai, *Arlit*, (documentary film)

Abderrahmane Sissako, *Bamako*, (feature film)

Sembène Ousmane, *Ceddo*, (feature film)

PROGRAM

Jan 24 The language of freedom in Africa: the pioneers of national liberation

P. Taoua, "Introduction," *African Freedom*
Kwame Nkrumah, speeches
Patrice Lumumba, speeches
Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (excerpts)

Jan 31 The language of freedom in Africa: scholarship and definitions

P. Taoua, "Introduction," *African Freedom*
Orlando Patterson, *Freedom in the Making of Western Culture* (excerpts)
Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (excerpts)

Feb 7 Canonical African narratives: the introspective gaze and intimate self

P. Taoua, "Chapter One," *African Freedom*
Ayi Kwei Armah, *Fragments*, (novel)

Feb 14 Canonical African narratives: women's engagement with freedom

P. Taoua, "Chapter Two," *African Freedom*
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, (novel)

Feb 21 New African nations: sovereignty, markets, culture

P. Taoua, "Chapter Three," *African Freedom*
Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (excerpts)
Fred Cooper, *Africa Since 1940* (excerpts)

Feb 28 Canonical African narratives: from national liberation to meaningful freedom

P. Taoua, "Chapter Three," *African Freedom*
Sony Labou Tansi, *Life and a Half* (novel)
Jihan El-Tari, *Cuba: An African Odyssey* (film)

Mar 14 Post-national dynamics in the era of global capital

P. Taoua, "Chapter Four," *African Freedom*
Geoff Eley, "Historicizing the Global"
James Ferguson, *Global Shadows* (excerpts)

Mar 21 Canonical African narratives: pillaging with less impunity in era of global capital

P. Taoua, "Chapter Four," *African Freedom*
Robert Nugent, *End of the Rainbow*, (documentary film)
Idrissa Mora K'pai, *Arlit*, (documentary film)
Abderrahmane Sissako, *Bamako*, (feature film)

Mar 28 Canonical African narratives: spiritual realm

P. Taoua, "Chapter Five," *African Freedom*
Sembène Ousmane, *Ceddo*, (feature film)
Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, (novel)

April 4 Conclusion and review: areas of narrative interest and the emerging ideal of freedom

P. Taoua, "Conclusion," *African Freedom*