

**RSOC 191:**  
**(Building through Resistance): The Religions of Colonized Peoples (Africa)**  
**Spring 2017**  
**Tuesday/ Thursday 2-3:40 PM**  
**Kenna 212**

**4<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

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**Office Hours: Wednesdays 2-3 PM or by appointment**

**Course Description**

The aim of this course is critically to analyze from an **emic (insider)** perspective, the impact of **colonialism** in Africa and the **response of the colonized** to the phenomenon. Specifically, the course will critically examine the *role of religion in the process of colonizing Africa* as well as in *the process of resistance and in energizing liberation struggles*. Thus, using specific examples, the course will examine the religious underpinnings of resistance to colonialism in its diverse manifestations in Africa. This will include an examination of the role of religion in the African struggle against *political oppression, economic injustices, racism and cultural imperialism*.

**Please Note:**

1. This Course fulfils the New Core Requirements: ie. It is an RTC 3 course
2. It is also an excellent sequel to RSOC38 and 46: both on African Religions
3. It is one of the courses that count towards the Religion and Politics pathway in the new core.

**Specific Objectives Related to the Course:** Students who successfully complete this class will:

1. **Demonstrate a critical/analytical understanding** of the phenomenon of colonization and its implications for society.
2. **Show ability** to appreciate and **critically analyze** the social -political role of religion in Africa and its beyond.
3. **Demonstrate ability** critically to appreciate the role of religion **both in creating situations of oppression as well as in being a resource to resist oppression**.
4. **Be able critically to analyze** the social-political implications of religion in their own contexts.

**Understanding RSOC191 as a Core Course**

RSOC 191 is one of the several courses that is *designed to fulfill RTC3 New Core* requirements : According to RTC3 Core Guidelines , these courses build on the first 2 courses ie ( RTC 1 and RTC2 (eg ROC 46 mentioned above) )and are designed to help students *"apply insights from the study of religion to difficult questions of vital interest*

become a suitable springboard for your response papers and your midterm. See below. **(10% of final grade) (see also role of note cards below)**

**(This requirement fulfils core objective: 3a):** Students will be assigned readings on colonization that offer an “emic” (insider) perspective. They will also more often than not be assigned **at least 2 different readings on each of the themes** discussed in class: For example, in trying to map 19<sup>th</sup> century European (mis) Representations of “Pre colonial Africa”, two articles one by a non -African Africanists and another by an African Africanist will be assigned to provide the students with **diverse perspectives** and views and thus facilitate their ability to analytically “evaluate” the various ethical issues embedded in the *whole question of colonization*

3. **2 response papers:** This should be 3- 4 double spaced typewritten pages and should reveal students’ critical engagement with an *issue or issues arising out of* the readings or class discussions. (see supplementary reading **Keeley, Asking the Right Questions for tips on how to identify and respond to issues** ). This should be the students’ opportunity to explore an issue or issues that intrigue them by commenting on or questioning them **(10% each, total 20%)**.

( This assignment assumes the *open ended nature of the questions being explored and also encourages analytical responses that do not prematurely close the path towards further exploration*. The issue of religion and its implication of freedom is a perennial one and defies any quick answers defined once and for all.

**This requirement therefore fulfils Core Goal 3b:** Through their analytical response papers, students are supposed to “*show off*” their ability to “evaluate and apply insights gained from the study of the social political role of religion as this manifests itself among “colonized peoples” (of Africa in this case) . These insights are formulated by historians, anthropologists and scholars of religion contemplating the phenomenon and injustice of Colonization and the role of religion in this context . (for tips on how to address open ended questions in an analytical manner without “closing” the path for future analysis, see supplementary reading: *Asking the Right Questions*: segments on (i) The Myth of the Right answer ii) Panning for gold iii) Weak sense versus Strong Sense Critical thinking )

4. **Group Project Form TBA:** Students will work in small groups to explore topics and various subthemes at the intersection of religion and Colonization in Africa:

*This will also help achievement of RTC3b: The topics for Group work are cases in point to test students’ ability to evaluate and apply insights from Readings in RSOC 191: The topics for discussion are open ended though they are based off **specific case studies**. (See sample of potential topic from a list to be distributed in day 2 of Class): **20% final Grade***

5. **Midterm:** format TBA :**This will test achievement of course goals :**It will be designed to allow students to demonstrate what they have learnt in terms of content of the class by week six and to demonstrate their *developing ability critically to analyze the role of religion in the African social political landscape*: which is our case study **25% of final Grade**
6. **One final Essay :** (A list of possible topics will be distributed by week 7). This essay will be from a list of **open ended questions** designed to allow the student to apply what they have learnt over the quarter in a *synthesized way* : *The fulfillment of RTC 3b goal will thus be tested .*

Consequently , students are encouraged to develop a strong **sense of academic honesty and integrity** at all times , a fact that **is self rewarding both in the short and long run** . (In this context, students are reminded that use of **internet as a learning tool is encouraged** but academic honesty and integrity is expected even **in the use of internet resources**. Thus, downloading and presenting as **yours other people's work** from the internet could trigger charges of plagiarism. Use the internet creatively but ethically to advance your learning that of others in the learning community that is **RSOC191**.

- 2 **Attendance** : Class attendance is mandatory except for emergencies which should be explained **to me in advance**, preferably in writing with appropriate documentation of your situation in order to determine whether your absence is excusable ..You are expected to arrive to class on time and attend **every class meeting** . More than 2 **unexcused absences** will lower your grade **by a letter**. Missing more than 3 **class periods** *invites an F* for the class. If you require special accommodation you should indicate the need for such accommodations in advance and submit the appropriate documentation through the **Student advising center** in timely manner(**not later than 2<sup>nd</sup> day of week 1**) . Attending another class and/or its requirements, or other commitments that *irrevocably conflict with class scheduling will not count as "excusable absence" unless there are very rare and urgent and specific circumstances under which such an absence can be justified*. In which case, consult with me in good time about your **circumstances** to determine what, if any, accommodations **are possible**. Attendance also means more than mere **physical presence** in the class. It is up to you to demonstrate that you are **actively present**. Distracting yourself via "activities" that have little to do with the class (such as on the side conversations that disrupt self and others , or texting and other "misuse" of electronics (phones and pads) will **dis-count your presence** ! Tardiness will also undermine your attendance grade , so avoid it!
- 3 **Academic Accommodation**: If you need special consideration and accommodation due to disability or other pertinent circumstance, please seek this accommodation through the office Disability resource center: Phone 408 554 4111 TYY 408 554 5441. Please indicate your need for accommodation in (no later by Friday week 1) to ensure a timely and meaningful accommodation
- 4 **Collegiality**: It is expected that your participation in this class will be marked by a strong **sense of respect and civility towards all in the learning community in and outside the class**. **Disruptive activities** (eg leaving cell phones on or laptop activities unrelated to class, and other use of electronic devises in a manner that **distracts you** or other members of the class is a mark of lack of collegiality. So is abrupt and disruptive **premature or tardy** arrivals and departures from class. While disagreements and differences of **opinion are expected** and even encouraged as you navigate your way "**from echo to voice**" regarding the admittedly hotly debated and contested nature of the class topics, disrespectful comments or on the side conversations that interrupt, subvert or do not help move

### ***Week 3: THE COMING OF EUROPEANS AND THEIR RELIGION:***

***1<sup>st</sup> response paper due (Friday 4PM in order to include insights from week 3)***

**18<sup>th</sup> April** The *Ambiguity of the 19th Century* missionary movement

Readings: Jean Marc Ela: *African Cry*: Chapter 2, Sandgren Chapter 1 (On Camino)

Video Excerpts: Basil Davidson: *Africa: Voyage of discovery*: This Magnificent African Cake

**20<sup>th</sup> April** African Encounter with Missionary Christianity: Kusoma Christianity and the Gikuyu Response...

Readings: Sandgren: *Christianity and the Kikuyu*: Chapter 2 & 3 (on Camino)

Video Excerpts: Basil Davidson: *The Bible and the Gun*

### ***WEEK 4: RELIGIO- CULTURAL CONFLICT AND AFRICAN RESPONSES***

**25<sup>th</sup> April** Religio Cultural Conflict :The 1920's Irua Controversy in Kenya:

Readings: Sandgren, Chapter 4, & 5

Video: The Bible and the Gun continued:

**27<sup>th</sup> April ( Home alone :Read on :** African Responses to Cultural Imperialism: The Gikuyu Case. Readings: Ngugi WA Thiongo: *The River Between*. (Revisit Kenyatta chapter 6)

### ***Week 5 THE RISE OF POLITICAL MOVEMENTS OF PROTEST.***

**May 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**Part 1: group on religion and Cultural imperialism**

**Part 2: Introduce : Colonialism and the issue of landlessness: The Gikuyu case.**

Readings : Kanogo: *Squatters and the Roots of Mau Mau* : Introduction Chapter 1-3

(video Basil Davidson: ( The Rise of Nationalism)

**May 4<sup>th</sup> :** Thunder from the Mountains. The Gikuyu Response to Landlessness.

Readings: Kenyatti: *Thunder From the Mountains*

Kanogo: *Squatters and the Roots of Mau Mau* : Chapters 4&5

**Group 2. On Indigenous Religion and Quest for Political Freedoms:**

### ***Week 6: RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS OF PROTEST: THE RISE OF INDEPENDENT CHURCHES and Black Theologies of Liberation .***

**May 9<sup>th</sup>** The Historical context of African Independent Churches.

Readings: Hood: *Must God Remain Greek*: Introduction and Chapter 2, African Cry Chapter 4

Video: Zulu Zion

**May 11<sup>th</sup>** Religious Responses to Racial Injustice : The Rise of Black Theology In South Africa;

Readings: Hood : *Must God Remain Greek*: Chapter 3(Pdfs on Camino)

Video Resource: Excerpts from Sarafina/Amandla

**Midterms. Distributed :Modalities TBA**

### ***Week 7: Religion and the Economic Decolonization:***

### Reading List:

1. Ela, Jean Marc Ela: African Cry (Orbis books, 1986):Reprints)
2. Kenyatta: Facing Mount Kenya (Vintage Books, 1965)
3. Kenyatti, Maina: Thunder from the Mountain: (Africa World Press, 1990) Collection of Mau Mau Songs.
4. Sandgren D. Christianity and the Kikuyu (Peter Lang) (Excerpts on Camino)
5. Ngugi Wa Thiongo Ngugi WA: The River Between (Heinemann 1965))
6. Kanogo: Squatters and Roots of Mau Mau (James Curry)
7. Tutu Desmond: No Future Without Forgiveness
8. The New Scramble for Africa (excerpts)

Excerpts other pertinent texts will be placed on Camino as PDFs

### Appendix : List of videos and other supplementary resources (some are available on line or in the library

1. Basil Davidson: Africa: Voyage of Discovery series : Parts 3&4: Caravans of Gold
2. Basil Davidson: Africa: Voyage of Discovery: Parts 5&6 This Magnificent African Cake: The Bible and The Gun
3. Basil Davidson: the **Rise of Nationalism** :
4. Amandla /Sarafina
5. The Long Search Series: Zulu Zion etc (The whole series is available in the library )
6. Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai (available in the Library )
7. As We Forgive:
8. Sweet Dreams

### *Addendum to Syllabus:*

#### 1. Navigating the Readings:

**Thematic, Analytical and Synthetic Readings:** The readings are organized thematically. For each themes, there will be **at least two different texts** to allow for access to **different perspectives** on the theme for you to consider in your analysis. When you approach the readings, remember to **read for the theme** and also to read **synthetically** (ie considering all the texts on the theme) in an analytical manner. Eg. On 14<sup>th</sup> January for example , the first theme: *Issues in the (Hermeneutics )* interpretation of African Religions: 2 texts are assigned: One Mudimbe : Explores the roots of the rather negative images of Africans and their religions and traces these to the ethnocentric colonial discourse of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (builds on Bratlinger article on Victorians and Africans which traces *the negative* images to the *myth of the dark continent* )) : The second readings by Idowu assumes the negative impact of the “misnaming of African Religions and unpacks why the language used to describe African Religions is Erroneous . The Readings on 16<sup>th</sup> January are from Kenyatta who expands Idowu’s thesis by reconstructing the **Gikuyu religio-cultural system** as a coherent and meaningful one contrary to the dismissiveness of 19<sup>th</sup> Century writers . :Reading these texts analytically and synthetically allows you **a holistic an understanding** of the problem of interpretations of Africa for and how these misinterpretations paved the way for and sustained colonialism .

bring both your written notes (responding to the questions to guide readings ) and note cards to class for reference. All this particularly boosts and documents your preparation and participation grades .!

## **Appendix 2: University Policies and Tips For Navigating Special Needs and Obligations**

1. **Academic Integrity :** The academic integrity pledge is an expression of the university commitment to an understanding of and commitment to a culture of integrity at Santa Clara University. The Academic Integrity Pledge which applies to all students states : I am committed to being a person of integrity .. I pledge as a member of Santa Clara University to abide by and uphold the standards of academic integrity contained in the Student Conduct Code. Students are expected to uphold the principles of this pledge for all work in this class. For more information about Santa Clara University's academic integrity pledge and resources about ensuring academic integrity in your work see [www.scu.edu/academic-integrity](http://www.scu.edu/academic-integrity)
2. **Disabilities Resources:** If you have a disability for which accommodation may be required in this class, please contact disabilities Resources , Benson 216 : [www.scu.edu/disabilities](http://www.scu.edu/disabilities) as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the university . If you have already arranged accommodations through Disabilities Resources , please discuss them with me during office hours . While I am happy to assist you , I am unable to provide accommodations until I have received verification from disabilities Resources. The disabilities Resources Office will work with students and faculty to arrange proctored exams for students whose accommodations include double time for exams and or assisted technology. (students with approved accommodations of time and a half should talk with me as soon as possible . Disabilities Resources must be contacted in advance to schedule proctored exams or to arrange other accommodations . The disabilities Resources offices would be grateful for advanced notice of at least two weeks . For more information you may contact Disabilities resources at 408 554 4109
3. **Accommodations for Pregnancy and Parenting**

*In alignment with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and with the California Education Code, Section 66281.7, Santa Clara University provides reasonable accommodations to students who are pregnant, have recently experienced childbirth, and/or have medical needs related to childbirth. Pregnant and parenting students can often arrange accommodations by working directly with their instructors, supervisors, or departments. Alternatively, a pregnant or parenting student experiencing related medical conditions may request accommodations through Disability Resources.*

### **Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct (Title IX)**

*Santa Clara University upholds a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct. If you (or someone you know) have experienced discrimination or*

**RSOC 191 African Religions Spring 2017**

**Submit a self-introduction answering the following questions: (On Camino 1pm)**

1. Name, year of study?
2. Your Major? and/ or Minor
3. *RTC 1, &2 course done?* If so, which ones
4. What attracted you to enroll in this class
5. How, if at all is this *class related to your other classes?*
6. How is this *class related to your personal/ and or career goals?*
7. *How prepared are you for this class? How if at all is this class a possible sequel to your RTC1 which is a prerequisite for this class?*
8. What questions , if any do you expect this course to address and why?
9. Indicate **whether you have read the Syllabus and understood the course , its requirements and policies:** and if there are points that you need clarifications about , indicate which .

*(The self introduction should not exceed 1 typewritten page: submit on Camino and also bring copy of this introduction to class on 6<sup>th</sup> April*

**Prompts to Guide readings for Week 1: Wednesday**

**Theme: Issues in the Hermeneutics of African Religions and Cultures :Understanding the myth of the dark Continent and its impact**

**Reading Article: by Bratlinger : Victorians and the Africans: The Genealogy of the Myth of the Dark continent.: (On Camino )**

1. Identify *three types* of literature that prevailed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe and indicate :
  - a) How this literature contributed to the **myth of the Dark continent**.
  - b) How the *myth created through* this literature paved the way to the *colonization of* Africa.
2. What is **social Darwinism** and
  - a) How is this related to the colonization of Africa
  - b) How did this phenomenon affect the *definition* of African Religions.
3. **From Self:** Can you **think of examples of the legacy of the Myth of the Dark continent** that manifests in contemporary ideas and practices about Africa? (give at **least 2 examples**).
4. ... But the *ethnocentric discourse of domination was not met with silence*... though it has not been easy to recover, modern historians have began piecing together how Africans responded to *their Victorian-savior invaders*... **what 2 examples** of response to the discourse of domination does Brantlinger give?

**Submit concise written responses on Camino by due date and time, Bring hard copy to class for o in class reference.**