Botswana: Development in Southern Africa
Spring 2019
Urban Africa

Instructors:
• Dr. Stephen Volz, Kenyon College

Course Description

This course explores the role that towns and cities have played in African history, tracing the development of urban areas from early times up to the present. In regarding urban areas as integral features of African societies, the course questions stereotypes of Africa as essentially rural and traditional, examining instead African capacities for cultural synthesis, adaptation and innovation. Among the general themes studied are urban-rural relations, trade, political centralization, industrialization and globalization. Given the immensity of the continent and its history, the course focuses on a select assortment of urban areas as case studies, with particular emphasis on southern Africa and the twentieth century. It also utilizes a range of sources such as archaeology, memoirs, government documents and literature, and it includes scholarship from sociology and other disciplines.

Requirement

The grade for the class will be determined by the number of points earned out of a possible total of 500, apportioned as follows: four unit exams (100 points each), five occasional quizzes or responses to assigned readings (10 points each), a map assignment (20 points), and participation in class discussion (30 points). Classes will be a mix of lecture and discussion, with more lecture in some than others. Students are expected to participate actively and intelligently in discussion, thoughtfully considering the different viewpoints of the authors, the instructor and one another.

In order to participate, students will, of course, need to be present, and unexcused absences will result in a lowered participation grade. Each student will be allowed two “free” absences, but every absence after that will result in the loss of 3 points from the participation grade. It is the responsibility of the student to complete any test, quiz or reading response that may have been missed due to an absence, whether excused or not. Such missed assignments can be completed up to one week after the date when they were due, but if the absence was unexcused, they will receive a 30% deduction.

It is expected that all work that you turn in is your own and is not copied from the work of others. When quoting from published sources, include a citation with that source’s bibliographic information. If you have any concerns regarding the quality or integrity of your work, you are encouraged to consult with Prof. Volz.
The final letter grade will be determined by the percent of points earned out of the total of 500, according to the following scale provided by the University of Botswana:

- 90-100% A+
- 85-99% A
- 80-84% A-
- 75-79% B+
- 70-74% B
- 65-69% B-
- 60-64% C+
- 55-59% C
- 50-54% C-
- 45-49% D+
- 40-44% D

Readings

The readings listed for each day should be read in preparation for that day's class. The four required books are available for purchase in the University of Botswana bookstore:


The other readings are journal articles and excerpts from various books, available as downloadable files from the course folder in GoogleDrive. Each student will need to have a GoogleDrive account, which can be created free at [https://www.google.com/drive/](https://www.google.com/drive/).

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

*Please note: dates are based on 2016 calendar and subject to change.*

UNIT ONE — URBANIZATION IN EARLY AFRICA

23/1 Introduction
   Hull, *African Cities and Towns*, xiii-xxi

25/1 African Urbanization in World History
   Freund, *The African City*, 1-36

27/1 Origins of Africa’s First Urban Areas

30/1 Architectural Diversity
   Hull, *African Cities and Towns*, 33-71

1/2 Cultural Diversity
   Hull, *African Cities and Towns*, 96-117

3/2 Economic Specialization and Regional Trade
   William Bascom, “Urbanization Among the Yoruba”, *American Journal of Sociology*
60, 5 (1955), 446-454

6/2 Social Organization and Settlement Patterns
   Hull, *African Cities and Towns*, 74-95

8/2 Agro-Towns in Southern Africa
   Thomas Huffmann, “Archaeological Evidence and Conventional Explanations of
   Southern Bantu Settlement Patterns”, *Africa: Journal of the International
   African Institute* 56, 3 (1986), 280-298

10/2 Centers of Politico-Religious Authority
   Karl Butzer, “Empires, Capitals and Landscapes of Ancient Ethiopia” *Archaeology*
   35, 5 (1982) 30-37
   John Thornton, “Mbanza Kongo/ São Salvador: Kongo’s Holy City”, in David

13/2 Early Long-Distance Trade Centers
   M. de Villiers and S. Hirtle, *Timbuktu: The Sahara’s Fabled City of Gold*, 150-180
   Studies Review* 16, 1 (1973), 119-130
   excerpt in class from film *The Lost Libraries of Timbuktu* (2008)

15/2 Afro-European Coastal Port Towns
   Freund, *The African City*, 37-64

17/2 Unit One test in class

UNIT TWO — COLONIAL TOWNS

20/2 Role of Towns in European Colonization
   Freund, *The African City*, 65-106

22/2 Transformation of Old Towns
   Akin Mabogunje, “The Growth of Residential Districts in Ibadan”, *Geographical
   Review* 52, 1 (1962), 56-77

24/2 Centers of European Control
   Phyllis Martin, “Taking Hold of the Town, 1915-1960”, in *Leisure and Society in
   Colonial Brazzaville* (1995), 45-70

27/2 Urbanization and Segregation in South Africa
   Freund, *The African City*, 107-137

1/3 Kimberley during the late 19th century
   and Richard Rathbone (eds.), *Industrialisation and Social Change in South
   Africa* (1982), 238-258

3/3 Johannesburg during the mid-20th century
   Susan Parnell and Gordon Pirie, “Johannesburg”, in Anthony Lemon (ed.), *Homes*
Apart: South Africa's Segregated Cities (1991), 129-145
Bloke Modisane, Blame Me On History (1986), 5-32

6/3 Urban-Rural Relations in South Africa
Alan Paton, Cry the Beloved Country (1948), chapters 1-3
Excerpt in class from film Cry the Beloved Country (1951)

8/3 Ascendance of Urban Over Rural
James Genova, "Africanité and Urbanité", in S. Salm and T. Falola (eds.), African Urban Spaces in Historical Perspective (2005), 266-283

10/3 Unit Two test in class

11/3 to 19/3 MID-SEMESTER BREAK (no class meetings)

UNIT THREE — POST-COLONIAL CAPITALS

20/3 Post-Independence Challenges
Freund, The African City, 142-169

22/3 Urbanization and Nation-Building

24/3 Founding of National Cities
Bekker & Therborn, Capital Cities, 1-6

27/3 Dakar
Amadou Diop, “Dakar”, in Bekker & Therborn (eds.), Capital Cities, 32-43

29/3 Dakar, continued
in-class showing of film “La Petite Vendeuse de Soleil” (1999)
<map assignment due in class>

31/3 Nairobi

3/4 Gaborone

5/4 Gaborone, continued

7/4 no class meeting (Prof. Volz will be absent)

10/4 Lagos and Abuja

12/4 Unit Three test in class

14/4 to 17/4 EASTER BREAK (no class meetings)

UNIT FOUR — CHALLENGES OF RECENT URBAN GROWTH

19/4 Crisis of Rapid Urbanization

21/4 Government
Deborah Potts, “City Life in Zimbabwe at a Time of Fear and Loathing”, Cities in Contemporary Africa, 265-284

24/4 Youth, Gender and Social Order
in-class showing of film Tsotsi (2005) [first half of film]

26/4 Youth, Gender and Social Order, continued
Guillaume Iyenda and David Simon, “Gender Relations, Bread Winning, and Family Life in Kinshasa”, Cities in Contemporary Africa, 221-235
in-class showing of film Tsotsi (2005) [second half of film]

28/4 Youth, Gender and Social Order, continued
discussion of readings and film for the week

1/5 LABOUR DAY (no class meeting)

3/5 Housing
Sumila Gulyani, Ellen M. Bassett and Debabrata Talukdar, “A Tale of Two Cities: A Multi-Dimensional Portrait of Poverty and Living Conditions in the Slums
of Dakar and Nairobi” *Habitat International* 43 (2014), 98-107
excerpt in class from film *My Mother Built This House* (2002)

5/5 Transportation
M. Anne Pitcher and Aubrey Graham, “Cars Are Killing Luanda”, *Cities in Contemporary Africa*, 173-191

8/5 Migration and Ethnic Tensions

10/5 African Hip Hop and Urban Culture

12/5 Summary and Conclusion
discuss student essay topics