

GENDER IN NORTH AND WEST AFRICA

Course Syllabus Spring 2015

Course Number: AFR 372G; MES 342-28; WGS 340-34 ; ISL 373-8;
 MEL321-16
Unique Numbers: 29760; 40700; 40805; 41070; 46655
Class Meeting: T/TH 11am- 12.30pm PAR 103
Professor: Dr. Tola Mosadomi
Office: CAL 413
Office Hours: W/TH 2-3.30pm, and by appointment
E-mail: mosadom@austin.utexas.edu

Course Description:

Scholarship on gender in Africa has increasingly become more inclusive and more encompassing. While Western feminist discourses of ‘Third World’, particularly African women, tell tales of voicelessness, victimization, weakness, subjugation, and oppression, another set of images depicts African women as assertive and self reliant. This war of double imaging and doubled image will be investigated in relation to another set of contradicting images, that of African men: powerful and indispensable products of colonial masters’ ideologies, and ‘useless characters that women can do without’. Are these double identity images of African men and women configured or reconfigured by colonial discourses? This course will examine gender discourses through North African and West African literary works and films by investigating the role(s) played by Islam and Christianity in the creation of the identities of African men and women. We will also examine the term ‘gender’ whether it is biologically determined, or socially constructed.

Course Objective:

The course seeks to develop in students an understanding and appreciation of African gender theories through an examination of the variables between the realities of African gender perspectives and current gender theories. Students should engage in effective, meaningful dialogue that not only affects Africa but also the West, thus increasing our awareness in cross-cultural gender issues.

Required Texts:

Akinwumi Isola. *Efúnsetán Aníwúrà, Ìyálóde Ibàdàn and Tiníubú, Ìyálóde Egbá: Two Yorùbá Historical Dramas*. Translated by. Pamela Olubunmi Smith. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press Inc., 2005.

Bâ, Mariama. *So Long a Letter*. Trans. Modupe Bode-Thomas. London and Nairobi: Heinemann, 1981.

Oyôno–Mbia, Guillaume. “Three Suitors, One Husband” in *Faces of African Independence: Three Plays*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 1988..

Adichie, Chimamanda. *Half of a Yellow Sun*. Maine: Anchor Group Publishing, 2007.

El Saadawi, Nawal. *Woman at Point Zero*. London: Zed Books, 2007.

Recommended:

Adichie, Chimamanda. *Americanah*. New York: Doubleday Publishing Group. 2013.

Djebar, Assia. *Fantasia: An Algerian Calvacade*. Trans. Dorothy Blair. London: Quartet Books, 1989. Translation of *L’Amour, la fantasia*.

Please purchase your course packet at Jenn;s Copies on 22nd & Guadalupe (512-473-8669); e-mail is 2200@jennscopies.com

The required and recommended texts are available at the Coop.

Course Outline

WEEK 1 Introduction

Tue Jan 20 Introduction to Course

Readings: Find definitions of gender

Bring your (typed) definitions of gender to next class (Thursday Jan 22, 2014). No more than 2 typed pages, Font 12, Times New Roman

**Thu Jan 22 Defining ‘gender’
Reviewing definitions of gender**

WEEK 2 Gender in Africa

Tue Jan 27 Introduction to Gender in Africa

Readings:

Cornwall, Andrea. Introduction: “Perspectives on Gender in Africa”. *Readings in Gender in Africa*, Andrea Cornwall, Editor. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005, pp. 1-19

Thu Jan 29 Introduction to Gender in Africa

Readings:

-Beoku-Betts, Josephine “Western Perceptions of African Women in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries” in *Readings in Gender in Africa*, Andrea Cornwall, editor. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005, pp. 20-30

WEEK 3 *So Long a Letter*

The Female African Writer

Tue Feb 3 Mariama Bâ

Readings:

Cham, Mbye B. “Contemporary Society and the Female Imagination: A Study of the Novels of Mariama Bâ”. Durosimi Jones, Eldred, editor. *Women in African Literature Today*, 15, 1987

Thu Feb 5 Islam and Women in Africa: *So Long a Letter*

Readings:

Abuk, Christina. “Urbanisation’s Long Shadows: Mariama Ba’s *So Long A Letter*”. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 29, No 4;723-740, July 2003.

WEEK 4

Tue Feb 10 Islam and Women in Africa: *So Long a Letter*

Readings:

Bernal, Victoria “Women & the Remaking of Islamic ‘Tradition’ in a Sudanese Village” in *Readings in Gender in Africa*, Andrea Cornwall, Editor. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005, pp. 164-177

Thu Feb 12 VIDEO

WEEK 5 *Three Suitors, One Husband*

Tue Feb 17 ‘Drama’ in Francophone Africa

Readings:

Ogundokun, Sikiru, A. Guillaume Oyono-Mbia’s *Trois pretendants.. un mari*: Is it a case of or a generational conflict? *IOSR of Humanities and Social Science, Volume 9, Issue 3* (Mar.-Apr 2013), pp. 10-14

Thu Feb 19

Francophone Dramatist: Guillaume Oyono-Mbia

Readings:

Ogundokun, Sikiru, A. Guillaume Oyono-Mbia's *Trois pretendants.. un mari*: Is it a case of or a generational conflict? *IOSR of Humanities and Social Science, Volume 9, Issue 3* (Mar.-Apr 2013), pp. 10-14

WEEK 6

Three Suitors, One Husband Continued

Tue Feb 24

Tradition versus Modernity

Readings:

Mosadomi, Fehintola. "Marriage, Women, and Tradition in Guillaume Oyono Mbia's "Three Suitors, One Husband". Online Refereed Journal: www.westaficareview.com/war/vol2.1

Thu Feb 26

VIDEO

WEEK 7

Efunsetan Aniwura

Tue Mar 3

History, Drama, and Akinwunmi Isola

Readings:

Awe, Bolanle "The Iyalode in the Traditional Yoruba Political System" in *Readings in Gender in Africa*, Andrea Cornwall, editor. Bloomington,: Indiana University Press, 2005, pp. 196-200

Thu Mar 5

Efunsetan Aniwura

Readings:

Mosadomi, Fehintola. "Yoruba Iyalode: Gender, Power, and Governance". *JENdA: A Journal of Culture and African Women Studies*, Issue 16 (2010)

WEEK 8

Efunsetan Aniwura

Tue Mar 10

Olu Omo Tinuubu

Readings:

Sudarkasa, N. "The Status of Women in Indigenous African Society". *Feminist Studies*, 12.1, 1986

Thu Mar 12

Olu Omo Tinuubu

VIDEO: Efunsetan Aniwura

WEEK 9 Mon Mar 16 - Fri Mar 21 SPRING BREAK

WEEK 10

Tue Mar 24 MID SEMESTER EXAM

Thu Mar 26 VIDEO: Half of a Yellow Sun

WEEK 11

Tue Mar 31 *Half of a Yellow Sun*: Adichie, the Author

Readings:

Interviews

- Youtube.com: Love, race, and hair
www.npr.org/2013/05/11 on love, race and hair
- Youtube.com: Beauty does not solve any problem
- YouTube.com: Powerful Words (on African Voices)

Thu Apr 2 *Half of a Yellow Sun*: Expression of Fiction and History

Readings:

Interview

- Theguardian.com: “Don’t We all Write about Love”?
- The TEDx Talk Beyonce Sampled and why We Should Forget Feminism baggage’
www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/03/06
- www.themorningnews.org/article/chimamanda_ngozi

WEEK 12

Tue Apr 7 *Half of a Yellow Sun*

Readings:

- www.pbs.org/wres/tavissmiley/interviews/chimamanda
- www.interviewmagazine.com/culture/chimamanda

Thu Apr 9 VIDEO: Moolade

Readings:

WEEK 13

Woman at Point Zero

Tue Apr 14

Nawal El Saadawi: the Woman, the Author

Readings:

“Woman at Point Zero”. [http:// www.wmich.edu/dialogues/texts/womanatpointzero](http://www.wmich.edu/dialogues/texts/womanatpointzero)

Thu Apr 16

Nawal El Saadawi: The Author

Readings:

-Khaleeli, Homa. “Egypt’s Radical Feminist.” TheGuardian.com

-Smith, Sophie. “Interview with Nawal El Saadawi, Cairo, 29th January 2006)”

WEEK 14

Tue Apr 21

Analysis of the Major Characters in *Woman at Point Zero*

Readings:

***El Saadawi, Nawal. “

”

The Journal of the Midwest Language Association, Vol 33, No. 3, (Autumn, 2000-
Winter, 2001), pp. 34-39

Thu Apr 23

Analysis of the Themes in *Woman at Point Zero*

Readings:

WEEK 15

Group Project Meetings

Tue Apr 28

Group Project Meeting

Thu Apr 30

Group Project Meeting

WEEK 16

Group Oral Presentations

Tue May 5

**Group Term Papers Due Today
Group Oral Presentations**

Thu May 7

**Group Oral Presentations
Last day of Class**

Grading Policy:

Attendance and Participation:	10%
Mid Semester Exam	40%
Group Term Paper	30%
Group Oral Presentation	10%
Individual Assigned Readings	10%

Grading Policy Continued

A	=	94-100
A-	=	90-93
B+	=	88-89
B	=	85-87
B-	=	80-84
C+	=	78-79
C	=	75-77
C-	=	70-74
D+	=	68-69
D	=	65-67
D-	=	60-64
F	=	59-0

Mid-term Exam:

There will be a mid-semester exam of the works studied prior to the mid-term exam. Students are advised to prepare for each class by doing the readings and in turn prepare for the mid-term exam. **No make up mid-term exam.**

Group Term Paper

There will be an end of semester term paper per group. Each student should contribute a minimum of 6 pages and a maximum of 7(minus bibliography) to the group term paper, so that the work is equally divided. No late term papers will be accepted from any group, no matter the problems in the group. Students will be placed in groups and a topic will be assigned to each group by the professor. If a student is absent from group term paper discussions, such a student will lose the grade for that term paper, if officially reported, depending on my findings. **No make-up term paper.**

All term papers should be turned in to me **in class only, otherwise they will not be accepted.**

Assigned Readings

Readings will be assigned to students throughout the semester. These graded assigned readings (with a brief summary of about 2-3pages typed written to be turned in on the day of

presentation) are designed to get all students engaged. Readings that are not found in the course packet will be sent to students by Blackboard, or handed out in class. Please check your e-mail/Blackboard regularly not just for readings but for updates. **No make-up assigned reading oral presentations.**

Group Oral Presentation:

At the end of the semester, there will be group oral presentations. Oral presentation, like the term paper, should be structured: introduction, body, and conclusion. No YouTube presentations. You need permission from the professor if you will use technology for presentation of your work, which means—come to class early to prepare the use of the consul. No student shall interrupt another student, or interrupt a group presentation. One who interrupts will earn zero for his/her group presentation. Do not show up late for your group presentation, otherwise I will take 10 points off your grade, whether individual or collective. **No make-up group or individual presentations.**

-No student shall read from his or her paper. Prepare to use flashcards and speak spontaneously.

Video:

Some films / documentaries will be watched in class followed by discussions—oral or written. Some others will be watched at home as required, and I have copied and pasted a PDF of how to streamline a film at the end of this syllabus

CLASSROOM POLICY

Classroom policy and course syllabus can be amended as the semester progresses.

Any distraction or disruption of class will have serious consequences. 20 points will be deducted from final grade, which can earn a student an ‘F’.

Attendance and Participation:

Regular attendance in class is of utmost importance. With 3 or more tardies, your overall grade will be lowered by 10 points. With 4 absences, you lose 20 points of your overall grade. With 5 absences, you automatically have an ‘F’. You are allowed 3 absences (including medical excuses or any other excuses that may arise) without penalties. Excessive absence policy overrides the grading policy. For example, if you earned an ‘A’ overall and you were excessively absent (absent beyond 4 times), you automatically earn an ‘F’. Active participation is required of all students. The student is responsible for whatever is missed in class due to absence, illness, etc.

Using e-mail:

I check my e-mail once a day. I may not be able to respond to your e-mail the same day, so plan accordingly. Make appointments by e-mail to meet with me if need be. Do not make appointments with me in class. I cannot track such. If you plan to spend more than 20 mins with me during office hours, if I have other students at that time, you will need to share the time, or let me know ahead of time so as to plan for the other students.

Electronic Device: Silent cell phones, text messaging, and laptops etc:

There will be **no use of cell phones in this class. No text messaging.** Keep your phones off your desk. Similarly no laptops are allowed. 30 points will be deducted from final grade if you do not abide by my policy.

Accommodations: The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

Plagiarism:

-No student shall share his or her work with any other student. **Avoid instances of plagiarism which will have grave consequences. See University regulations on plagiarism:**

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty:

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information please visit the Student Judicial Services Web site: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>

See: UT Honor Code (or statement of ethics) and an explanation or example of what constitutes plagiarism (Link to University Honor Code: <http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/ch01/index.html>)

Religious holidays:

A notice regarding accommodations for religious holidays. (Sample statement—“By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.”)

Emergency Evacuation Policy: From the Executive Vice President and Provost, and the Dean’s office

“Recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus

Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/> :

- Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.
- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors.
- Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
- Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): 512-232-5050
- Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: www.utexas.edu/emergency

GUIDELINES FOR TERM PAPERS

-A good research goes beyond what is taught in class. The use of the library is of utter importance to good research work. The interlibrary loan and the reference library are very important. Consult with African professors, or professors who are Africanists.

When you are writing a paper, you need to have an objective. A term paper needs (1) an introduction (2) the body and (3) a conclusion. A conclusion is not a summary. I will discuss this further in class

-Paragraphing is essential.

-Paper should be typed in font 12, Times New Roman, and page numbered.

-The paper should have a cover sheet with title in bold, with name and course title on the lower right hand corner followed by the due date on the next line.

- All papers should be stapled and turned in at the beginning of class on the due date.
- Late paper and any other late written homework will earn a zero. No exceptions.
- No student shall share his or her work with any other student. Avoid cases of plagiarism
- A thorough academic research, **using journal (peer reviewed) articles, videos, interviews, books**, is required. These are more reliable than internet research (e.g. www.african.....) for term papers and oral presentations. The professor has provided an initial bibliography that is not exhaustive.
- The use of MLA Style **is required** for bibliography.

Selected Bibliography

- Abdel-Jaouad, Hédi. "L'Amour, la fantasia: Autobiography as Fiction." CELFAN Review 7:1-2 (1987-88): 25-29.
- Akande, S.T. *Marriage and Homemaking in Nigerian Society*. Ibadan: Day Star Press, 1971.
- Aina, Olabisi. "Mobilizing Nigerian Women for National Development: The Role of the Female Elites," *African Economic History* 21 (1993):1-20.
- Aina, Olabisi. "African Women at the Grassroots: The Silent Partners of the Women's Movement" in *Sisterhood: Feminisms and Power: From Africa to the Diaspora*, Obioma Nnaemeka, editor. Trenton, N. J.: Africa World Press Inc., 1998, pp. 65-88.
- Awolalu, J.O. and P.A. Dopamu. *West African Traditional Religion*. Ibadan: Onibonoje Press, 1979.
- Awe, Bolanle. "The Iyalode in the Traditional Yoruba Political System" in *Readings in Gender in Africa*, Andrea Cornwall, editor. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005, pp. 196-200.
- Awe, Bolanle. Editor, "Ìyálóde Efúns,etán Aníwùrà", in *Nigerian Women in Historical Perspective*, Bolanle Awe, editor. Lagos: Sankore and Bancroft, 1992
- Bascom, W. *The Yoruba of Southwestern Nigeria*. New York: Holt, Rhinehart, and Winston.
- Conteh_Morgan, John. Guillaume Oyono-Mbia : "Trois Pretendants.....un mari" in *Theatre and Drama in Francophone Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994

Cornwall, Andrea. *Readings in Gender in Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005.

Denzer, Laray. "Yoruba Women: A Historiographical Study". *The international Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol 27, 1, (1994), pp. 1-39.

Cornwall, Andrea. Editor. *Readings in Gender in Africa*. London: Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005.

Kamara Gibreel, M. "The Feminist Struggle in the Senegalese Novel: Mariama Ba and Sembene Ousmane". *Journal of Black Studies* 2001; 32, 212

Lawal, Nike, Matthew Sadiku, and P. Ade Dopamu. *Understanding Yoruba Life and Culture*. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 2004

Lucas, J.O. *The Religion of the Yorubas: Being an Account of the Religious Beliefs and*
Morton-Williams, P. "An Outline of the Cosmology and Cult Organization of the Oyo Yoruba". *Africa* 34, 1964, pp. 243-261.

Mba, N.E. *Nigerian Women Mobilized: Women's Political Activity in Southern Nigeria 1900-1965*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982.

Mbiti, John S. *Introduction to African Religion*. Oxford: Heinemann, 1991.

_____. *Concept of God in Africa*. London: S.P.C.K., 1970.

_____. *African Religions and Philosophy*. London: Heinemann, 1969.

Mosadomi, Fehintola. "Marriage, Women, and Tradition in Guillaume Oyono Mbia's "Three Suitors: One Husband" in *Electronic Journal West Africa Review* Ed. Nkiru Nzegwu, (Special Issue) 2:1, 2000

Nnaemeka, Obioma. *Sisterhood, Feminisms and Power: From Africa to the Diaspora*. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press Inc., 1998.

Ogundipe, Molara. "The Female Writer and Her Commitment". Durosimi Jones, Eldred, editor. *Women in African Literature Today*, 15, 1987, pp. 4-13

Ogundipe-Leslie, Omolara. *Recreating Ourselves: African Women and Critical Transformations*. Trenton, NJ: African World Press, 1994.

_____. "Women in Nigeria Today", in *Women in Nigeria Today*, ed., Editorial Committee. London: Zed Books, 1985: 119-131.

Ogundipe, Molar. "Indigenous and Contemporary Gender Concepts and Issues in Africa: Implications for Nigeria's Development". In YorubaAffairs@googlegroups.com pp.1-16, Nov 13, 2006.

Olupona, J. K. *African Traditional Religions*. New York: *International Religions Foundation*, 1991.

_____. *African Spirituality: Forms, Meanings, and Expressions*. New York: Crossroad, 2000.

Oyèwùmí, Oyèrónkẹ *The Invention of Women: Making African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997.

Oyewumi, Oyeronke. "Visualizing the Body: Western Theories and African Subjects", in *The Invention of Women: Making African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997, pp 1-30.

Oyèrónkẹ Oyèwùmí. "Reconstituting the Cosmology and Sociocultural Institutions of Òyo-Yorùbá", in *The Invention of Women: Making African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997, pp. 31- 49.

Radcliff, Brown and Daryl Fordes. Editors. *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965.

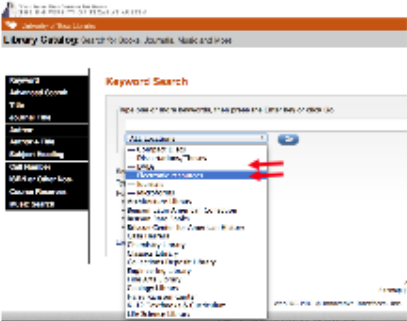
Sofola, Zulu. "Feminism and African Womanhood" in *Sisterhood, Feminisms and Power: From Africa to the Diaspora*, Obioma Nnaemeka, editor. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press Inc., 1998, pp. 51-64.



DVDs, CDs & Streaming

UT Libraries' Fine Arts Library houses DVDs and sponsors video files for streaming from the Library Catalog.

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