YORUBA WOMEN

Fall Semester 2010

Course Number: **AFR 317C (35245); (47025)**
Meeting: **T/TH 11-12.30 PAR 101**
Professor: **Dr. Tola Mosadomi**
Office: **MES 5.120B**
Office Hours: **M, W 2-2.45pm, and by appointment**
E-mail: mosadom@mail.utexas.edu

Course Description:

In the past couple of decades, African women's/ gender studies have increasingly become a focus of inquiry in many spheres--- socio-economic, political, religious, and cultural. However, Western feminist and womanist perspectives and theoretical frameworks have dominated the studies and analyses of African women's lives. This course, which focuses on Yorùbá women, will examine gender construction in Yorùbáland and further explore the differences between Western gender construction and African notions of gender. For many centuries before colonization, the Yorùbá of southwestern Nigeria had a history of statehood supported by different categories of power--- military, religious, and political. By analyzing the religious, linguistic, and socio-political aspects of cultural, and socio-political aspects of Yorùbá life, the course will shed light on gender relations in Yorubaland and revisit the construction- -African/Yoruba womanhood in extant scholarship.

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 will engage in effective and meaningful dialogue that not only affects Africa but also the West, thus increasing an awareness in cross-cultural gender issues.

Required Texts: All readings in course packet are required

******(Reading) Course Packets: Available at the UT Copy Center, TX Union, Room 2.214, 2247 Guadalupe Phone: 475-6675**

Akinwumi Isola. ***Efúns etán Aníwúrà, Ìyálóde È gbá: Two Yorùbá Historical Dramas*. Translated from the Yorùbá. Pamela Olubunmi Smith, translator. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press Inc., 2005.**

Cheryl Johnson-Odim and Nina Emma Mba. ***For Women and the Nation: Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti of Nigeria,* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997. This course packet is available in the Textbook Department in the basement of the Co-op.**

Films and video interviews will be made available as needed

COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK 1

THU AUG 26 **Introduction to course**

WEEK 2

TUE AUG 31 **Introduction to course**
The Yoruba in Nigeria

Readings:
Lawal, S. Nike, Matthew N.O. Sadiku, and P. Ade Dopamu. *Understanding Yoruba Life and Culture*, Trenton, N.J. : Africa World Press Inc., pp. 3-49.
***Read about the Yoruba people and culture online.

THU SEP 2 **The Diaspora Yoruba in the Americas**

Readings:
Reis, Joao Jose and Beatriz Gallotti Mamigonian. "Nago and Mina: The Yoruba Diaspora in Brazil" in *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World,* Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs, editors. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004, pp. 77-110.

WEEK 3

TUE SEP 7 **The Diaspora Yoruba in the Americas**

Readings:
Michele Reid. "The Yoruba in Cuba: Origins, Identities, and Transformations" in *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs, editors. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004, pp 111-129

THU SEP 9 **Gender in Africa: Introduction**
Individual term paper assigned

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

WEEK 4

TUE SEP 14 **Gender in Africa: Western Perceptions**

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, pp. 20-30. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005.

Oyèwùmí, Oyèrónkẹ□ . **"**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.

THU SEP 16

Readings:
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.

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

WEEK 5

TUE SEP 21 **African Feminisms**

Readings:

Nnaemeka, Obioma. "Mapping African Feminisms" in *Readings in Gender in Africa,* ed. Andrea Cornwall, pp. 31-40, Andrea Cornwall, editor. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005, pp. 20-30.

THU SEP 23 **Readings:**

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.

Oyewumi, Oyeronke. "Introduction: Feminism, Sisterhood, and Other Foreign Relations, pp. 1-24; and chapter 2 "The White Woman's Burden: African Women in Western Feminist Discourse" pp. 25-41 in *African Women and Feminism: Reflecting On the Politics of Sisterhood.* Trenton, N. J.: Africa World Press Inc., 2003.

WEEK 6

TUE SEP 28 **VIDEO INTERVIEW: Feminism**

THU SEP 30 **VIDEO INTERVIEW: Feminism**

WEEK 7

TUE OCT 5 **Religion**

Readings:

Olajubu, Oyeronke. *Women in the Yoruba Religious Sphere*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003, pp.40-42; 65-92.

THU OCT 7

Abiodun, Rowland. Woman in Yoruba Religious Images. *African Languages and Cultures* 2.1 (1989): 1-18.

WEEK 8

TUE OCT 12 **Cultural Institutions**

Readings:
Babatunde, Emmanuel. "Traditional Marriage and Family" in *Understanding Yoruba Life and Culture* pp. 217-235.

Olajubu, Oyeronke. "Widowhood Rites", in *Women in the Yoruba Religious Sphere*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003, pp. 101-105.

THU OCT 14

Readings:
Oyèrónkẹ Oyèwùmí. "Reconstituting the Cosmology and Sociocultural Institutions of Òy ọ -Yorùbá in Oyèrónkẹ Oyèwùmí, *The Invention of Women: Making African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*,. Minneapolis:University of Minnesota Press, 1997, pp. 51- 79.

WEEK 9

MID SEMESTER REVIEW

TUE OCT 19 **INDIVIDUAL ORAL PRESENTATIONS**
INDIVIDUAL TERM PAPERS DUE

THU OCT 21 **INDIVIDUAL ORAL PRESENTATIONS**

WEEK 10

TUE OCT 26 Politics
Readings:
Akinwumi Isola. *Efúns etán Aníwúrà, Ìyálóde È gbá: Two Yorùbá Historical Dramas*. Translated from the Yorùbá. Pamela Olubunmi Smith, translator. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press Inc., 2005.

THU OCT 28
Readings:
Akinwumi Isola. *Efúns etán Aníwúrà, Ìyálóde È gbá: Two Yorùbá Historical Dramas*. Translated from the Yorùbá. Pamela Olubunmi Smith, translator. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press Inc., 2005.

WEEK 11

TUE NOV 2 Politics
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 NOV 4 VIDEO

WEEK 12

TUE NOV 9 Politics

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

THU NOV 11

Readings:
Cheryl Johnson-Odim and Nina Emma Mba. *For Women and the Nation: Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti of Nigeria*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997.

WEEK 13

TUE NOV 16 **FEMALE CIRCUMCISION**

Readings:
Nnaemeka, Obioma. "African Women, Colonial Discourses, and Imperalist Interventions: Female Circumcision as Impetus" in *Female Circumcision and the Politics of Knowledge.* Obioma Nnaemeka, editor. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2005, pp. 27-45.

THU NOV 18
Readings:
Ajayi-Soyinka, Omofolabo. "Transcending the Boundaries of Power and Imperialism: Writing Gender, Constructing Knowledge in *Female Circumcision and the Politics of Knowledge,* Obioma Nnaemeka, editor. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2005, pp. 47-110.

TUE NOV 23 **VIDEO**

NOV 25-28 **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS**

WEEK 14

TUE NOV 30 and THU DEC 2 **GROUP ORAL PRESENTATIONS**
GROUP TERM PAPERS DUE IN CLASS

THU DEC 2 **LAST DAY OF CLASS**

Grading Policy:

Attendance and Participation:	10%
Assigned Readings (with brief typed-written summary)	10%
Individual Term Paper	25%
Individual Oral Presentation	15%
Group Term Paper	25%
Group Oral Presentation	15%

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

Individual Term Paper
There will be a mid semester term paper of 5 to 7 pages (minus bibliography). A topic will be assigned to each student by the professor. If you have difficulties researching and writing, see me immediately following the assignment, or seek help immediately at the writing center. **No late term papers will be accepted.**

Group Term Paper
There will be an end of semester term paper of 7 to 10 pages (minus bibliography). Students will be placed in groups. A topic will be assigned to each group by the professor. **No late term papers will be accepted.**

All term papers (group and individual) should be turned in to me **in class only.**

Assigned Readings
Required readings will be assigned to each student throughout the semester. No more than 2 assigned readings (with a brief summary) per student. These assigned readings get all students engaged. Your participation grade will be lowered if you do not contribute to class readings/discussion.

Oral Presentation:
In the middle of the semester, there will be an individual oral presentation of each student's mid-term paper. At the end of the semester, there will be an oral presentation of group term

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

Video:
Films / documentaries will be watched in class, followed by discussions.

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'.

Silent cell phones and text messages:
There will be **no use of cell phones or text messaging whatsoever** in this class: 30 points will be deducted from final grade, (or you may not be allowed to continue with the course).

Attendance and Participation:
Regular attendance in class is of utmost importance. With 3 or more tardies, your overall grade will be reduced 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.

Accommodations: The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-62598, 471-6441 TTY

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

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

"In the event of a fire or other emergency, it may be necessary to evacuate a building rapidly. Upon the activation of a fire alarm or the announcement of an emergency in a university building, all occupants of the building are required to evacuate and assemble outside. Once evacuated, no one may re-enter the building without instruction to do so from the Austin Fire Department, University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

Students should familiarize themselves with all the exit doors of each room and building they occupy at the university, and should remember that the nearest exit routes may not be the same as the way they typically enter buildings.

Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform the professor as soon as possible—1st week of classes".

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. **No WIKIPEDIA!!**

-**The use of MLA Style is required for bibliography**.

References

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Aina, Olabisi. "Mobilizing Nigerian Women for National Development: The Role of the Female Elites," *African Economic History* 21 (1993):1-20.

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Awe, Bolanle. Editor, "Ìyálóde Efúns etán Aníwúrà", in *Nigerian Women in Historical Perspective*, Bolanle Awe, editor. Lagos: Sankore and Bancroft, 1992

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Brandon, George. *Santeria from Africa to the New World*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997.

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Gleason, Judith. *Oya-In Praise of an African Goddess*. London: Shambhala, 1987.

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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.

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Nnaemeka, Obioma. Editor. *Female Circumcision and the Politics of Knowledge: African Women in Imperialist Discourses.* Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2005.

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

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Yusuf, Y.K. "Contradictory Yoruba Proverbs about Women: Their Significance for Social Change" In *Nigerian Women and Social Change*, ed., Simi Afonja and Bisi Aina. Ile-Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University Press, 1994.