**Politics in Africa: Contesting Development**

Designed by Dr Portia Roelofs  
*LSE Fellow, Department of International Development, LSE*[*p.roelofs@lse.ac.uk*](mailto:p.roelofs@lse.ac.uk)

10 week half-unit course for masters students

**Rationale:**

This course starts from the recognition that foundational concepts that shape politics – progress, development, and democracy – are essentially contested. Through studying African political contestation on the ground, and the ways in which scholars both within and without have sought to theorise this contestation, we gain a deeper and more varied understanding of politics itself. Moreover, it focuses on the varied and historically informed ideas that Africans hold about how society should be ordered, what the aims of political action are and how common resources should be shared. Finally, the assessment structure will orient students towards engaging with contemporary debates that are happening on the ground in African countries. The main summative assessment will be an independent research project into an ongoing debate that centres on contesting one of the core concepts of the course.

1. **Introduction: Doing politics, Studying Africa**

**Required:**

* Mustapha, Abdul Raufu. "Rethinking Africanist political science." CODESRIA bulletin 3-4 (2006): 3-10.
* Owomoyela, Oyekan. "With friends like these… A critique of pervasive anti-Africanisms in current African studies epistemology and methodology." *African Studies Review* 37.3 (1994): 77-101.
* Gallie, W. B. 1955. “Essentially Contested Concepts.” Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society 56: 167–98.
* Kate Meagher; Smuggling ideologies: From criminalization to hybrid governance in African clandestine economies, African Affairs, Volume 113, Issue 453, 1 October 2014, Pages 497–517, <https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adu057>

**Further:**

* Mkandawire, Thandika and Olukoshi, Adebayo, eds. (1995) Between liberalisation and oppression: the politics of structural adjustment in Africa. CODESRIA, Dakar, Senegal. ISBN 9782869780538
* Mudimbe, Vumbi Yoka. *The invention of Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988. Introduction.
* [Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement](https://lse.rl.talis.com/items/81E18245-51E1-2451-08AE-489269926232.html?referrer=%2Flists%2F25C47C05-0041-485A-4C29-4545F841BEDE.html%23item-81E18245-51E1-2451-08AE-489269926232) - Peter P. Ekeh 1975

1. **Contesting development, contesting modernity: Aspiration, future and progress**

**Required:**

* Macamo, Elisio. Against Development. CODESRIA Bulletin 3+4 2005. <https://learning.uonbi.ac.ke/courses/ICS617_001/document/Development_-_Does_it_Really_Exist_-_Against_Dev_-_macamo.pdf>
* Roelofs, Portia (forthcoming. Under review) at Africa: Journal of the International Africa Institute. “The Ajumose progressive train is coming. No ticket needed, only mindshift”: Middle class hype, enlightened citizens and how African governments use the idea of the new non-poor.
* Introduction. Witsoe, Jeffrey. *Democracy against development: Lower-caste politics and political modernity in postcolonial India*. University of Chicago Press, 2013.
* Africa Must Be Modern: A Manifesto. Olufemi Taiwo. 2011.

**Further readings:**

* [Negotiating Modernity: Africa’s Ambivalent experience](https://books.google.co.uk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=GMlRCoa5DQoC&oi=fnd&pg=PA1&dq=El%C3%ADsio+Macamo&ots=xK6fPvWQyC&sig=IWbhzYdXUbPr6ywelQC-96T2xsA#v=onepage&q=El%C3%ADsio%20Macamo&f=false). Elysio Macamo ed. Introduction.
* The Long-Term Effects of Africa's Slave Trades. Nathan Nunn. The Quarterly Journal of Economics, Vol. 123, No. 1 (Feb., 2008), pp. 139-176

1. **Technocracy and Populism: representing the winners and losers of development?**

What does the state owe its citizens? Redistribution, performance or recognition?

* Thurston, Alexander. "The Politics of Technocracy in Fourth Republic Nigeria." *African Studies Review* 61.1 (2018): 215-238.
* Branch, Daniel. *Kenya: Between hope and despair, 1963-2011*. Yale University Press, 2011.  
  *Argues that there are competing emphasises in Kenyan politics between a politics of redistribution and a politics of recognition. Elites have succeeded in making recognition dominant.*
* MacLean, L., Bob-Milliar, G., Baldwin, E., & Dickey, E. (2016). The construction of citizenship and the public provision of electricity during the 2014 World Cup in Ghana. The Journal of Modern African Studies, 54(4), 555-590. doi:10.1017/S0022278X16000574
* Hoffmann L., Nolte I. (2013) The Roots of Neopatrimonialism: Opposition Politics and Popular Consent in Southwest Nigeria. In: Adebanwi W., Obadare E. (eds) Democracy and Prebendalism in Nigeria. Palgrave Macmillan, New York

1. **Does modernity mean imitation? If so imitation of whom?**

* S is for Samora: A Lexical Biography of Samora Machel and the Mozambican. Dream by S. Lefanu. London: Hurst & Company.
* Sumich, J. (2015). Legacies of Socialist Solidarity: East Germany in Mozambique by Tanja Müller Lanham, MA: Lexington Books, 2014.
* [The wretched of the earth](https://lse.rl.talis.com/items/A81CAB84-E5C3-2B2E-8E03-8238765C70EA.html?referrer=%2Flists%2F25C47C05-0041-485A-4C29-4545F841BEDE.html%23item-A81CAB84-E5C3-2B2E-8E03-8238765C70EA) - Fanon, Frantz 1991, c1963
* Thandika Mkandawire; [Thinking about developmental states in Africa](https://doi.org/10.1093/cje/25.3.289), Cambridge Journal of Economics, Volume 25, Issue 3, 1 May 2001.
* Meagher, Kate. “[Cultural Primordialism and the Post-Structuralist Imaginaire: Plus Ça Change](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40027300)” Africa: Journal of the International African Institute, vol. 76, no. 4, 2006, pp. 590–597.

1. **Why are you here? Intervention and foreign bodies**

* Third World Perspectives on Humanitarian Intervention and International Administration. Ayoob. 2012. Global Governance.
* “La vie en %$!” Diop, Boubacar Boris Foreign Policy; Jul/Aug 2010; 180
* Sanusha Naidu (2008) India's Growing African Strategy, Review of African Political Economy, 35:115, 116-128
* Bergamaschi, I. (2014). The fall of a donor darling: The role of aid in Mali's crisis. The Journal of Modern African Studies, 52(3), 347-378. doi:10.1017/S0022278X14000251
* [Dead aid: why aid makes things worse and how there is another way for Africa](https://lse.rl.talis.com/items/5FCB74C6-7F5D-5CCE-9F9B-35F26A538DA3.html?referrer=%2Flists%2F25C47C05-0041-485A-4C29-4545F841BEDE.html%23item-5FCB74C6-7F5D-5CCE-9F9B-35F26A538DA3) - Moyo, Dambisa 2010

1. **Them and Us: Exclusion, belonging and defining the valued political community**

**Required:**

* Political Parties, Social Demographics and the Decline of Ethnic Mobilization in South Africa, 1994-99. Jessica Piombo. Party Politics. Vol 11, Issue 4, pp. 447 – 470. 2005 – divergent trends in terms of ethnic and racial party mobilisation post demcoratisation in SA.
* Biruk, Crystal. 2014. “Aid for gays: The material and the moral in African ‘homophobia’ in post-2009 Malawi.” *Journal of Modern African Studies*52(3):447-473.
* Land, Mobility, and Belonging in West Africa by Carola Lentz. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press

**Further:**

* Sharia or Shura: Contenting Approaches to Muslim Politics in Nigeria and Senegal by Sakah Saidu Mahmud Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013. Pp. 196. £44·95 (hbk)  
  Comparing Political Islam in Nigeria and Senegal. Concludes unsurprisingly that it is Nigeria’s weak state that is the problem.

1. **Jobs, gender and generational politics: gendering growth**

* Adebanwi, Wale. “The Carpenter's Revolt: Youth, Violence and the Reinvention of Culture in Nigeria.” *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 43, no. 3, 2005, pp. 339–365. *JSTOR*, JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/3876059](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3876059)
* Iwilade, A. (2014). Networks of violence and becoming: Youth and the politics of patronage in Nigeria's oil-rich Delta. The Journal of Modern African Studies, 52(4), 571-595. doi:10.1017/S0022278X14000603

**And either:**

* Bush Bound: Young Men and Rural Permanence in Migrant West Africa by Paolo Gaibazzi Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2015.

**Or:**

* Hirt, Nicole, and Abdulkader Saleh Mohammad. "‘Dreams don't come true in Eritrea’: anomie and family disintegration due to the structural militarisation of society." The Journal of Modern African Studies 51.1 (2013): 139-168.

1. **Public sector reform, technology and creating citizens**

* Working Paper 73. ICTD. Taxation, Property Rights and the Social Contract in Lagos. Tom Goodfellow and Olly Owen. January 2018
* Fourchard, Laurent. "Bureaucrats and indigenes: Producing and bypassing certificates of origin in Nigeria." *Africa* 85.1 (2015): 37-58.Politics of technocracy
* N'guessan, K. (2014). The bureaucratic making of national culture in North-Western Ghana. The Journal of Modern African Studies, 52(2), 277-299. doi:10.1017/S0022278X14000020
* Fernandez, S., & Lee, H. (2016). The transformation of the South African Public Service: Exploring the impact of racial and gender representation on organisational effectiveness. The Journal of Modern African Studies, 54(1), 91-116. doi:10.1017/S0022278X15000816

1. **Policing, order and security: transnational state-society relations in order making**

* Meagher, Kate. “[Hijacking Civil Society: The inside Story of the Bakassi Boys Vigilante Group of South-Eastern Nigeria](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4486721.).” *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 45, no. 1, 2007, pp. 89–115.
* Learning and adaptation in governance reform in Nigeria. Lessons from the experience of the Lagos State Security Trust Fund. LEAP-PERL. Nov 2017.
* Hills, Alice. “[Trojan Horses? USAID, Counterterrorism and Africa's Police](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4017728).” *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 27, no. 4, 2006, pp. 629–643.
* Cross, C. (2014). Community policing and the politics of local development in Tanzania. The Journal of Modern African Studies, 52(4), 517-540. doi:10.1017/S0022278X14000433

1. **Historicising democracy and enduring institutions**How does multi-party competition in a liberal democracy compare with other representative institutions?

**Pick 3 from the following:**

Chiefs

* Traditional Leadership in South Africa's New Democracy Author(s): Prince Mashele Source: Review of African Political Economy, Vol. 31, No. 100, Two Cheers? South African Democracy's First Decade (Jun., 2004), pp. 349-354

Rules, Institutions and Informality

* Osei, A. (2016). Formal party organisation and informal relations in African parties: Evidence from Ghana. The Journal of Modern African Studies, 54(1), 37-66. . Argues for the importance of understanding informal networks within parties.
* Political corruption, party financing and democracy in Kenya. Oscar Mwangi. Journal of Modern African Studies. Volume 46, Issue 2 June 2008, pp. 267-285  
  Argues that rather than democracy and transparency going hand in hand, multi-partyism both creates new opportunities for corruption and for fighting it.
* Nicola de Jager & David Sebudubudu (2017) Towards understanding Botswana and South Africa’s ambivalence to liberal democracy, Journal of Contemporary African Studies, 35:1, 15-33
* Opalo, Kennedy Ochieng’. "African Elections: Two Divergent Trends." Journal of Democracy, vol. 23 no. 3, 2012, pp. 80-93. Project MUSE, doi:10.1353/jod.2012.0039

Quantitative paper charting the divergent trends of consolidation of democracy in Zambia and Cameroon in 2012.

Parties

* Creating political order: the party-states of West Africa - Aristide R. Zolberg 1966.

Democratic norms and theory

* Souaré, I. (2014). The African Union as a norm entrepreneur on military coups d’état in Africa (1952–2012): An empirical assessment. The Journal of Modern African Studies, 52(1), 69-94.
* Ademola Fayemi - Towards an African Theory of Democracy

Religion shaping democratic practice

* Tolerance, Democracy and Sufis in Senegal, edited by Mamadou Diouf. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.