

## **Global Africa: Theories and Cultures of Diaspora**

Sarah Lawrence College

Spring 2007

Dr. Mary E. Dillard

Changes in migration patterns, immigration laws and refugee policies have meant that Africans are living and working in unexpected places. Studies of the African diaspora used to focus on the dispersion of Africans as a result of the Trans-Saharan, Trans-Atlantic and Indian Ocean slave trades. More recent scholarship has focused on new African diasporas: Senegalese in Harlem, Ghanaians in Germany, Nigerians in Japan. These modern day dispersals, powered by the forces of globalization, demand new levels of analysis by scholars. This class seeks to understand the history of Africa and its diasporas in a way that takes seriously the global contributions of people of African descent. We will attempt to answer the questions: What constitutes the contours of the African diaspora? How have African migration patterns changed over time? How has an identification with Africa contributed to the articulation of religious and political movements outside of the continent? What role has class, ethnicity, gender, and race played in notions of return or exile? In addition to our work in the classroom, there will be a service learning component to this class where students will work with local organizations that serve African immigrants. By the end of the semester, students will have a clearer understanding of how present day African immigration patterns fit into a larger history of voluntary and involuntary migration to and from the continent.

### **Required books:**

James T. Campbell, *Middle Passages*

Judith Carney, *Black Rice: The African Origins of Rice Cultivation in the Americas*

Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora*

Buchi Emecheta, *Kehinde*

Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings*

Kevin K. Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana*

Michael Gomez, *Exchanging our Country Marks*

Janet MacGaffey and Remy Bazenguissa-Ganga, *Congo-Paris*

Mary Prince, *The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave* (Penguin Classics edition)

Joao Jose Reis, *Slave Rebellions in Brazil*

Paul Stoller, *Money Has No Smell: The Africanization of New York City*

Donald Wright, *The World and a Very Small Place in Africa*

**Recommended readings:** (books to consult for your research papers)

Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*

Joseph Harris, *The Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora*

CLR James, *The Black Jacobins*

Philippe Wamba, *Kinship*

\*\*\*\*All of the books for this class are available at the Sarah Lawrence College bookstore or are on reserve in the Esther Raushenbush library\*\*\*\*

**Course requirements:**

Active participation in class, conference and community partnership placement

5 short papers (three mini papers, two 4-6 page papers)

Research paper (10 pages)

Map quizzes: Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America

Presentation on themes from the reading

Leading class discussion once during the semester

Community partnership fieldwork journal and final written report

**Course expectations:**

There is a service learning component to this course. Each student will participate in a placement through the Office of Service Learning and Community Partnerships which will amount to approximately **3 hours per week**. Consistent, active participation at your placement site is a requirement of this class. In addition, this is a reading intensive class in which you will be completing between **250-300 pages of reading** per week. If you do not think you can fulfill the required time commitments, you should not take this class. I expect all students to come to class having finished the reading, completed their journal entries, and developed clear ideas about what you want to discuss in relation to the course materials.

I do **NOT** accept late papers. Written assignments must be submitted at the beginning of each class period on the due date. There are **no unexcused absences** in my class. If you are sick, I expect you to notify me before our class meets. Punctual attendance at class and conference is a requirement of this class. You will lose credit if you are consistently absent or late.

Please note: Updated versions of the syllabus will be available from my website at <http://pages.slc.edu/~mdillard>

**Course schedule:**

1/17 Introduction to course materials, introduction to Community Partnerships

**Modern African Migration- Europe**

1/24 Janet MacGaffey and Remy Bazenguissa-Ganga, *Congo-Paris*  
**Mini paper due:** What is Africa to me?

**How old is Globalization?**

1/31 Donald Wright, *The World and a Very Small Place in Africa*  
**Map quiz of Africa**

**Voluntary and Involuntary Migration**

2/7 Paul Stoller, *Money Has No Smell*

**Forced Migration: Enslaved Africans Speak**

2/14 Mary Prince, *The History of Mary Prince*  
**Map quiz of the Caribbean**  
**Mini paper due:** Voluntary and Involuntary migration

2/21 Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative*  
**Turn in journals**

**Rebellion and Revolution: Enslaved Africans Fight Back**

2/28 João José Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, Chapters 1,3, and 4 5,6, and 7  
**Paper due (4-6 pages)- Equiano and Mary Prince**  
**Map quiz of Latin America**

**The World the Slaves Made: Is there a Black Atlantic?**

3/7 Michael Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks*, Chapters 1, 3-7

**SPRING BREAK!**

**Debating Diaspora- Conflicting perspectives**

3/28 Complete descriptions TBA- these readings will be available from e-reserve  
George Shepperson

Lamelle and Kelley, Pan-Africanism

Michael Echeruo, "An African Diaspora: The Ontological Project" pp. 3-18 in  
Okpewho, Boyce Davies and Mazrui's, *The African Diaspora*.

Elliot P. Skinner, "The Restoration of African Identity for a New Millennium,"  
pp. 28-45

**Turn in journals**

**Debating Diaspora- Black Internationalism**

4/4 Brett Edwards, The Practice of Diaspora, pp. 16-305

**Paper due 4 -6 page paper due**

**African Migration- to Europe and back**

4/11 Buchi Emecheta, *Kehinde*

4/18 Judith Carney, *Black Rice*

**Mini paper due- Kehinde**

**Back to Africa- completing the circle**

4/25 James T. Campbell, *Middle Passages*, Introduction, Chapters 1-3, 6-9 and  
Epilogue

5/2 Kevin Kelley Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana*

**Final community partnership journals and paper due**

5/9 **Research paper due**