

Philosophy 331—African Philosophy

Wofford College Spring, 2009

Class Schedule: M, W, F 9:30-10:20am Daniel 218

Instructor: Prof. Charles D. Kay
Office: Daniel 201
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Required Texts:

- Imbo, *An Introduction to African Philosophy*
Rowman and Littlefield
- Achebe, *Arrow of God*
Anchor Books/Doubleday
- Ngugi, *The River Between*
Heinemann
- Kane, *Ambiguous Adventure*
Heinemann

Catalog Description:

An introduction to traditions of African philosophical thought focusing on problems of definition, sources, function, and methodology. The course compares the scope and application of African thought on basic philosophical questions of human existence with recent developments in Western philosophy.

Philosophy 331 may be used to satisfy the “Cultures and Peoples” category of the Wofford College General Education Requirements

Course Requirements:

The course will be conducted as a seminar. Participants will need to be present, prepared, and actively engaged in discussions. Final grades will be based in equal parts on three scheduled papers (25% each) and a class grade (25%) based on attendance and participation.

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Schedule of Readings:

- Feb 2 Introductory
- 4 Davidson, "Africa in Historical Perspective"
- 6 Otijele, "Understanding the African Worldview"
Oruka, "Sagacity in African Philosophy"
- 9 Imbo, *An Introduction to African Philosophy*, pp. 3-17
Appiah, *Necessary Questions*, ch. 8 "Philosophy"
- 11 Imbo, pp. 17-27
Achebe, *Arrow of God*, ch. 1-2
- 13 Imbo, pp. 27-46
Achebe, ch. 3-4
- 16 Imbo, ch. 2 "Ethnophilosophy and Its Critics"
Achebe, ch. 5-6
- 18 Achebe, ch. 7-8
Achebe, "The Igbo World and its Art"
- 20 Achebe, ch.9-11
- 23 Imbo, ch. 3 "Is African Philosophy Unique?"
- 25 Achebe, ch. 12-13
Oladipo, "Religion in African Culture..."
- 27 Achebe, ch. 14-16
- March 2 Achebe, ch. 16-19
- 4 discussion of *Wend Kuuni*
- 6 Masolo, "Western and African Communitarianism"

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Schedule of Readings (continued):

- March 9 Gyekye, "Person and Community in African Thought"
- 11 Achebe, "The Writer and His Community"
- 13 Kane, *Ambiguous Adventure*, ch. 1-2
Diagne, "Islam in Africa"
- 16 Kane, ch. 3-6
- 18 Kane, ch. 7-8
papers due
- 20 Kane, Part I
- 23 *Zan Boko*
- 25 Asike, "The City in Modern Nigeria"
- 27 continued discussion of *San Boko*
[Spring break]
- Apr 6 Kane, Part II
- 8 *Finzan* (7:00 pm)
- 10 AMA Council Report, "Female Genital Mutilation"
- 13 Ngugi, *The River Between*, ch. 1-8
- 15 Ngugi, ch. 9-13
- 17 Horton, "African Traditional Thought and Western Science"
- 20 Ngugi, ch. 14-18
Wiredu, "How Not to Compare African Traditional Thought..."
- 22 Ngugi, ch. 19-21
papers due

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Schedule of Readings (concluded):

- April 24 Ngugi, ch. 22-26
Achebe, "Language and the Destiny of Man"
- 27 Imbo, ch 4 "What Should the Language(s) of African Philosophy Be?"
- 29 Harding, "Other Others..."
- May 1 Harding, "Other Others..."
- 4 Imbo, ch 5 "Are There Connections...?"
- 6 Obiechina, "Multiple Perspectives..."
Wiredu, "Some Comments on Contemporary African Philosophy"
- 8 Conclusions

Final Paper due May 13

Reading schedule will be subject to change as seminar discussions develop.

Papers are subject to all provisions of the Wofford College Honor Code
(see <http://www.wofford.edu/uploadedFiles/studentLife/0708HonorCode.pdf>)