World War II and Africa

Course Description
Although largely ignored in most histories of World War II African civilians and military forces played a major role in the success of the Allied nations in their victory over the Axis powers. From Cape to Cairo colonial African communities were deeply affected by the military, economic and social dimensions of the war. The strategic value of Africa has been noted in terms of the battles for the control of North Africa. However, few scholars have noted the role that West African ports of call played in allowing Roosevelt to evade the neutrality laws of the U. S. Congress and supply Great Britain with airplanes and material for the battle in North Africa. Additionally, thousands of West African troops from the British colonies fought heroically in Burma against seasoned Japanese troops seeking to invade India. The French recruited over 200,000 from her colonies and they played a pivotal role until the armistice, in the colonies under Vichy command and later, as the backbone of the ‘Free France’ army of General Charles De Gaulle. Moreover the headquarters of the Free French government was in Brazzaville in the Congo. The experiences that African combatants had in Europe during the war as well as the hardship suffered by civilians at home are often cited as key factors in transforming the nationalist movement into a mass-based movement. The political significance of the war was clear early on when the Italian invasion of Ethiopia galvanized the Black diaspora throughout the world to run to her aid and to shape a discourse of sharpened nationalist critiques of colonial rule.

This course has several goals:

1. To recover the history of the role that African combatants, civilians and resources played in the war. This involves a reinterpretation of World War II.
2. To familiarize students with the debates in the historiography of World War II most especially those that focus specifically on Africa;
3. To train students to read critically and analyze both primary and secondary sources
4. To develop the critical skills of identifying and summarizing the main arguments of a text and the use of primary and secondary sources to support this argument;
5. To develop command of the writing skills, research methodologies and correct citation systems necessary for a successful college research paper.

Required Texts [Ordered at Rutgers Bookstore]

**A Note About Readings:** There are two books that function as text books: *World War II in Colonial Africa* and *World War II a Short History*. You may use the Parker book as a type of reference book to keep you aware of the events outside of Africa with emphasis on Europe. The second text by Osborne, is somewhat problematic, as it is written by a non-Africanist and has a number of rather severe errors, including the use of the term ‘native’, a derogatory term and a set of assumptions about ‘prosperity’ in Africa during the war. On the contrary the war was a period of rampant inflation, restrictions on the right to strike and great suffering in Africa. Nonetheless, you should use these books to fill in the ‘gaps’ in the reading. I have assigned sections of them for particular weeks, however, you may find them to be useful more extensively.

**Reserve Readings:** The bulk of the readings for the class will be available on SAKAI. You should download them and put them in a loose leaf notebook so that you can keep them in order. You will receive email messages when new readings or materials are added.

**Academic Integrity**
All students are expected to abide by the Rutgers University Code of Academic Integrity found at on the University’s web site below. Students may study together and give or receive ‘consulting’ help from other students. However one student should never copy or use the work of another. Additionally you cannot use work purchased from outside sources and submit them under your name.

[http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy#I_AcademicIntegrity](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy#I_AcademicIntegrity)

**Accommodations for students with disabilities**
I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required by students with disabilities. Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: [https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines](https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines). If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: [https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form](https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form).

**Bibliographies:** There are several bibliographies on SAKAI about Africa and World War II. They can be used for your paper. There are also other bibliographies in the Alexander Library as well as on-line that can be useful.

**Web Sites:** There are a number of web sites that include images and written material about Africa(ans) and World War II. Below are a few of them:

[http://africanhistory.about.com/od/wwichronology/ss/WWIJun40.htm](http://africanhistory.about.com/od/wwichronology/ss/WWIJun40.htm)


[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8344170.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8344170.stm)

[http://london.iwm.org.uk/](http://london.iwm.org.uk/)


You Tube – Senghor’s poem w/images
http://www.3dpublishing.com/crgibbs/troops3.htm

http://www.angelfire.com/ny/ethiocrown/Haile.html

Photos and other images:
There are a number of images on the web that are relevant for this class. Some of them will be available on SAKAI. As you conduct your research please put any images that you come across with their URL in your drop box. They can be used for your final presentation in class.

Films
A number of films will be shown throughout the course. You are expected to take notes in these films and treat their material as equal to printed material. You will have a number of writing assignments based on these films. Additionally World War II was a war in which film played an important role in propaganda, especially in colonial territories. Several of these films are available for viewing on line as newsreels on the BBC site

Optional Readings: These are included on the syllabus but are useful for your essay and your examinations. They are not required unless otherwise stated.

Course Requirements
Your grade will be based on
(1) Attendance: Only THREE unexcused absence
(2) Six short papers in preparation for a final paper
(3) Class participation – you must be current with the readings. This component of your grade also includes quizzes and other in-class assignments.
(4) Completion of the various preliminary stages of the paper
(5) One 10 page research paper Topics to be distributed in class.

The Research Paper:
Be sure to avoid plagiarism. See the RU Libraries web site.
http://www.rutgers.edu/academics/libraries
Instructions for the paper are on SAKAI. /Paper Instructions/ WWII and Africa Paper Instructions –3. This includes specific instructions and deadlines for the development of the paper and possible paper topics. The entire Paper Instructions section includes guides for your writing the paper and you are to use the Mary Lynn Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History. You may also use any published guides for writing history papers. ALL PAPERS ARE REQUIRED TO USE CORRECT END/FOOTNOTES(not those in parenthesis) AND CITATION SYSTEMS. IF YOUR PAPER DOES NOT COMPLY WITH THIS SYSTEM (PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO 2**nd** + REFERENCE) IT WILL NOT BE GRADED. THIS PAPER CONTRIBUTES THE LARGEST PERCENTAGE (40%) OF YOUR GRADE.

Cell phones and lap top computers – Please be sure your phone are OFF during class
You are not allowed to ‘text’ messages during your class on your cell phones. Students using lap tops may be required to sit in the front rows if they are suspected of using their computers for emailing or other on-line use during class.

Components of your final grade:

30% Essays
10% Abstract and annotated bibliography
20% Classroom participation: scheduled class discussions, etc.
40% One 10 page essay. This is the largest single component of your grade. You will have intermediary deadlines prior to the due date of this assignment. There will be a posting of possible topics on Sakai as well as instructions for your writing the paper. Any purchase of papers or other forms of plagiarism will be severely punished.

SYLLABUS

(Required readings will be indicated in class)

**NOTE:** ANY READINGS NOT IN YOUR TEXTS ARE ON SAKAI. Be sure to check all listings on your RESOURCES section of SAKAI. Some readings are not in the correct section.

**ONLINE SOURCES:** Links on the syllabus indicate sources on line. Several of them are the BBC – Story of Africa and contain interviews with African troops, songs sung or other materials. These are as important as written materials.

Osborne book – the Book Store says they cannot get this book until the end of March. If you can get a used copy you can do the readings on the syllabus. If not, please let me know.

**WEEK I  JANUARY 21 What does it mean to be a historian?**

Mary Lynn Rampolla. “Why Study History?” *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*


**FILM** “A New Germany”, The World At War.


http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8344170.stm

Essay 1 – Write a one page summary (250 words ONLY) of ‘The Africans who fought in WWII’ *Due in DropBox by Monday January 26*.

**WEEK II– JANUARY 28 Reading and Writing Like a Historian**

Mary Lynn Rampolla. " Working with Sources" , *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*

**Mussolini attacks Ethiopia: The First Salvo’s of Fascism - 1935**

**FILM** : “Lion of Judah War with Ethiopia 1935 1936”

Check images of Ethiopia (CHECK SAKAI/RESOURCES/PHOTOS)

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8201717.stm

The League of Nations and Italy in Ethiopia

R. Osborne *World War II in Colonial Africa*, Chapter 1


Optional


The Invasion of Ethiopia: Africa and the Diaspora React
William Scott. “The Harlem Revolt” (Chapt 11) and “Pan African Protest” (Chapter 12. *Sons of Sheba’s Race: African-Americans and the Italo-Ethiopian War, 1935-1941.* [Also see Endnotes for these chapters]


Optional


*Essay II: Coverage of the Invasion by the Press.* Locate articles from the African American or African and Mainstream U.S. and UK press. In a 3-page essay compare and contrast the coverage of the invasion. (*Essay Due in Drop Box February 4th*)

**WEEK III FEBRUARY 4TH - Africa and Europe on the Eve of War**

Mary Lynn Rampolla. “Reading and Writing in History”, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*

The ‘Rumblings’ of War in Europe – Germany and the Rise of Hitler

**FILM:** “A New Germany 1922-1939”; *The World At War*

Parker, Chapter 1

Collingham, “Germany’s Quest for Empire”, (Chpt 2) and “Japan’s Quest for Empire” (Chapt. 3) *The Taste of War: World War II and the Battle for Food.* (Sakai)

Africa on the Eve of War

Killingray, *Fighting for Britain,* Chapter 1

Osborne, *World War II in Colonial Africa* Chapter 2

Optional

Bill Freund, *The Making of Contemporary Africa* Chapter 5-7 [Sakai],

**WEEK IV, FEBRUARY 11TH The Colony at War: the Draft, Forced labor and Resistance**

The War Spreads

**Film:** TBA

Osborne  Chapter 4


Killingray , Chapter 2 (Recruitment)

Optional:

Essay III: In a 5-page essay, critique the films. Use information or insights from the readings to support your critique and/or raise questions. Use Rampolla, Chapter 3 on films. (Due in Drop Box Feb. 25)

WEEK V. FEBRUARY 18TH The Collapse of France and the Vichy - Free French Governments in Africa

FILM: “France Falls: May – June 1940” The World At War

Raffael Scheck, Hitler's African Victims: The German Army Massacres of Black French Soldiers in 1940 (17-67)

The Security Question in West Africa; The Vichy Government In West Africa


Osborne, Chapter 7

Parker, Chapter 3


African soldiers in Occupied France


Osborne, Chapter 15

Essay IV: Write a 3 page summary of the experiences of French African troops when France was defeated. Develop an analysis based on the readings above. (Due in Drop Box February 25th)

WEEK VI. FEBRUARY 25TH Africa’s Role in World War II Strategic and Economic Importance

The Strategic Importance of Africa during the war – Pan Am & Takoradi Route


Parker, Chapter 5 & 6

Osborne, World War II in Colonial Africa, Chapter 8


Army Life : African Troops: Using Oral Sources

ONLINE SOURCES: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/spl/hi/picture_gallery/06/africa_africa0s_world_war_ii_veterans/html/1.stm

Killingray, “Army Life”, Chapter 3

Or
Bildad Kaggia, Roots of Freedom 1921-1963


WEEK VII. —MARCH 4TH Africa’s Role in the War - Combatants and Sacrifice on the Home Front

FILM - Burma Boy

Osborne, Chapter 18,

Africa’s Role in the War – Provisioning of Supplies Food and Warfare
ONLINE Source:


Collingham, “Mobilizing the British Empire”, [Chapter 7] (SAKAI)


Essay V: In a 3-page essay, analyze one of these first person accounts of WWII. Use insights or evidence from our readings to support your analysis (Due March 11th)

WEEK VIII. MARCH 11TH Early victories, new challenges — Recapturing Ethiopia and hardship in Africa
Assignment: Using Primary Documents
FILM: TBA
Captives of War: African Prisoners in Europe
Osborne, World War II and Colonial Africa, Chapter 9


The East African Front;
Sir. Arnold W. Hodson, 'An Account of the Part Played by the Gold Coast Brigade in the East African Campaign, August 1940 to May 1941'.

Enugu Archives Documents: 82nd West Africa Division (SAKAI)

Reread relevant sections of Berhe Essay VI. Analyzing a Primary Document: Using one of the primary documents and the guidance of the Rampolla, write a 3 page analysis, drawing in your readings. (Due March 25th).

SPRING BREAK MARCH 18TH

WEEK IX MARCH 25TH The Battle for African Loyalties: The Atlantic Charter and Ideological Debate

FILM: TBA
The Atlantic Charter

Rosaleen Smyth, 'Britain’s African Colonies and British Propaganda during the Second World War', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*

Wendell Holbrook, 'British Propaganda and the Mobilization of the Gold Coast for the War Effort', *Journal of African History*

Document: 'The Atlantic Charter' SAKAI See SAKAI/Resources/

Cedric J. Robinson, 'Black Intellectuals at the British core: 1920's-1940's', in Jagdish S. Gundara (Editor), Ian Duffield (Editor), *Essays on the History of Blacks in Britain*

Osborne, 197-198


Propaganda Primary Documents: *Samples of British Propaganda in Yoruba, newspapers, and posters*. SAKAI

Propaganda


“FILMs for African Audiences”, *Colonial Cinema* Vol I. No. 4 (June 1943


WEEK X APRIL 1ST Stresses of African Life During the War – Settler Colonies

FILM: TBA

Kenyan Settlers and African urban women


The challenge of settler colonies

Optional


*Research Paper* Due Date for one paragraph description of topic and Annotated Bibliography of 3 books and 2 articles.

**WEEK XI  APRIL 8TH** African Combatants in the Theatres of

**FILM**: TBA

African Troops in Asia – Part I

Osborne, *World War II in Colonial Africa*, 321-323, Chapter 18


*Research Paper*: Schedule meetings with the professor

African Troops in Asia – Part II

Nigerian National Archives, ‘Report on a visit to the 82nd West Africa Division in Burma, Non-Divisional Units in India and West African Pioneer Groups in the Middle East’.

Optional


**WEEK XII  APRIL 15TH** War Urban Life and War Time Exactions: African Women and the War

**FILM**: TBA

Struggles in South Africa - Urbanization in a Settler Colony

Freund, Chapter 8


Political reactions in West Africa: Economic Stress and War Time


Reread: Cowen and Westcott from Week IV.

Freund, *The Making of Contemp. Africa* Chapter 9

*Research Paper* – Turn in the introductory paragraph to your paper.

**WEEK XIII  APRIL 22ND** Ex Servicemen as a force in Nationalist Movements

**FILM**: “Camp Thiaroye”
The fate of former Francophone African soldiers


The Political Impact of the War: Britain’s Veterans
Killingray, “Going Home and Demobilization” Chapter 6, “Ex-servicemen and Politics
Timothy Oberst, ‘Transport Workers, Strikes and the Imperial Response in Africa’


Osborne, Chapter 19

Optional:

**WEEK XIV  APRIL 29TH** The Post War Political Conjuncture: World War II and African Nationalism

**FILM:** Basil Davidson, ‘Towards Independence’


Osborne, Chapter 20

Killingray, ‘The Social Impact of War Service”, Chapter 8


Parker, Chapter 13 & 14


*Final Draft of Paper Due*