Short Essay Assignment  
psci0202 African Politics  
Middlebury College—Fall 2017  
Professor Nadia R. Horning

Instructions:

Your essay is due on Monday October 9 by 4:30 p.m. in the African Politics box outside my office door at the RAJ.

Your essay should not exceed **1,250 words**, excluding bibliography (run a word count in Word and report the number of words at the end of your essay), using the following components:

- A **cover page** with an essay title, your name, the course number, the Professor’s name and the date. Please write and sign the Honor Pledge on this cover page.
- Your essay with **page numbers** and NO headers or footers containing your name (for name-blind grading)
- Your bibliography, properly formatted (check your list of required readings and articles from the syllabus for formatting suggestions. If referring to lecture or discussion, just note (lecture mm/dd/yy or discussion mm/dd/yy).
- Sources from outside the course are **not** permitted.
- The paper should be **double-spaced** (except for the cover page and bibliography).

**Cautioning You against Common “Traps”**

1. Make time for proofreading your work.
2. Check your word processor and printer ahead of time to avoid last-minute technological problems (they tend to happen when you least need them).
3. Check your spelling and grammar before printing out the final version of your essay.
4. **Plagiarism** is a serious offense at Middlebury College. Make sure you avoid this “trap.” If you have questions about what may constitute plagiarism on any of your written assignments, speak to the Professor or consult the Middlebury Handbook.
5. Your essay is due on **October 9, 2017** (by 4:30 p.m.). Late work will be **penalized**. Without a Dean’s excuse, no extension will be granted. Since the answer is likely to be “no,” please **DO NOT ASK**.

**Grading Criteria**

This paper will be graded principally on the following criteria: (a) clarity of thesis (make sure that you state it in the Introduction); (b) a well-balanced argument that takes into account different sides of the issue; (c) use of well-selected and specific evidence to back up your claims; (d) logic of presentation; and (e) style (grammar and spelling).

Suggestions for essay writing are posted on our class web site. Please take a look to understand what is expected.

Grade-wise, an excellent paper will receive a grade in the A range; a good to very good paper in the B range; a paper that only partially addresses the question or meets only a few requirements of analytical writing will receive a grade in the C range. A D paper is a paper that is simply poorly written and fails to address the question appropriately. A paper will receive a grade of F if it is turned in 7 days (or more) late, or if it completely fails to address the question.
**Essay Questions**

Please answer one of the questions below.

**Question 1**

A totalitarian system is one whose aim is the total transformation of society on the basis of a totalistic ideology (e.g., communism and fascism). Reflecting on Africa’s experiences with colonization, do you think colonial systems were totalitarian? If so, how? If not, why not?

**Question 2**

psci0202’s first unit could easily be made into a course called European politics in Africa. Do you agree with this assertion? Please justify your answer with evidence from the course’s materials.

**Question 3**

Consider Aimé Césaire’s *Discourse on Colonialism*, Kwame Nkrumah’s 1963 “I Speak of Freedom” speech, and Julius Nyerere’s 1966 *Ujamaa* speech. Now picture yourself preparing two opposing teams for a debate on whether or not these three texts should be omitted from the syllabus for psci0202. What principal claims should be made to support each position?

Enjoy your writing!