Short Essay Assignment
PSCI 0202 African Politics
Middlebury College—Spring 2014
Professor Nadia Horning

Instructions:

Your essay is due on **Monday, March 10** at the beginning of class. 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 Code** 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. Proofread your work (it takes time).
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 **March 9, 2014 at the beginning of class. Late work will be penalized**. Without a Dean’s excuse, no extension will be granted.

**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 argument; **(d)** logic of presentation; and **(e)** style (grammar and spelling).

**Suggestions for effective 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

Was the European colonization of Africa a break or a mere continuation of the Atlantic Slave Trade? In answering this question, please provide specific examples from the readings, lectures, and discussions.

Question 2

According to French historian Bernard Lugan, “colonization was [...] a sixty-year, brief parenthesis in Africa’s long history.”¹ Based on what you have read and heard in the course, so far, what is your reaction to this statement? In answering the question, please consider the possible impacts of colonization on Africa’s political development.

Question 3

In 1968, Zimbabwean political leader and activist Ndabaningi Sithole referred to African independence as the move from “eurocracy” to “afrocracy.” Using specific examples from the readings, screening, and lectures, describe what “eurocracy” entailed. Drawing from post-independence state-building experiences, do you think “afrocracy” was achieved?

Question 4

Ryszard Kapuscinski once wrote: “The continent [of Africa] is too large to describe ... Only with the greatest simplification, for the sake of convenience, can we say ‘Africa’. In reality, except as a geographical appellation, Africa does not exist.” What is your reaction to the idea that Africa is too vast to say anything about “it?” Are there ways, based on your burgeoning knowledge of African politics, to strike the proper balance between generalizing and respecting the specificity of each African experience?

Enjoy your writing!