

History 8B South Africa from 1400 to Present

Fall 2020

Professor Timothy Burke

MWF 9:20-10:10 am (EST)

This survey course focuses on the history of South Africa, with special emphasis on the period from 1860 to the present day. Students will gain exposure both to the discipline of history and its methods and to the complexity and intellectual richness of historical and analytic writing by and about South Africans.

In the fall of 2020, this class will be taught in an online-only format with a mix of synchronous (“live”) and asynchronous (“prerecorded”) elements. Typically, on Mondays and Wednesdays, we will be meeting in Zoom for approximately 40-45 minutes, generally to discuss the assigned reading. We will be reading somewhere between 80 to 200 pages per week, usually split over class meetings. There will also be a ten-minute “profile lecture video” assigned each Wednesday that should be viewed before class, focused on a single individual South African.

Between Thursday and Sunday, students will need to view at a time of their own choosing two to three 15-minute pre-recorded lectures that will be on the class Moodle site and then in most weeks there will be a “challenge video”, which will lay out a challenge from me that I want all class members to respond to, with each student writing 2-3 paragraphs on a shared Google doc—essentially a “discussion” in writing.

There will also be two short response essays and a final exercise that will be done after campus departure on November 20th.

There are a few books you are expected to purchase for this course:

Shireen Hassim, *The ANC Women’s League*

Colin Bundy, *Short-Changed? South Africa Since Apartheid*

Steve Biko, *I Write What I Like*

Jacob Dlamini, *The Terrorist Album*

Swarthmore has a textbook-purchase assistance program: please use this if you are unable to afford these books. Hassim and Bundy are *only* available as print editions, so you will not be able to read them via an ebook or scanned PDF. We are not reading this until later in the semester, so there should be time for you to acquire the books.

Assessment

As per the policy adopted by the faculty during the summer of 2020, this class will be graded despite it being entirely online. However, I have tried to change the class exercises and my approach to assessment to reflect the affordances and limitations of an online format. In addition to our short

asynchronous writing, which you should really view as a form of participating in discussion, we will do two short and “traditional” response papers (2 pages) during the semester and a final exercise. Participation in the asynchronous discussions is required, but I will not be grading your work on those docs for analytic quality or craft (as long as what you write is at least somewhat responsive to the challenge video). I will grade your short papers in my usual way, for quality of analysis and attention to structure and coherence in your writing.

The final exercise will not be a traditional exam format. I will be asking you to do three things after Thanksgiving. First, you will be re-reading one of the authors we read this semester and reading a bit more of their work and about their career. You will be writing two “ask me anything” questions for that author. I will be grading these questions for their cogency and responsiveness to the author’s work. You will all join me in 35-minute Zoom conversations at some point during the two weeks after Thanksgiving based on your questions and those of your classmates.

Second, you will be writing a 2-3 page response essay on using South African history as you have learned it this semester to interpret one news story in South African media appearing at some point during the month of November. You will have two weeks to write this essay. We will start following South African news actively by the beginning of November.

Finally, you will be writing a 2-3 page reflection about the relevance of South African history and contemporary life is to other societies strongly scarred by their experiences of white supremacy and European colonialism. This can be a personal reflection, a formal analysis, or other take other creative forms.

I will be treating these three reflections as demonstrations of your ability to put what you have learned this semester—whatever that might be—to creative, political, analytic or personal use. As such, my grading of this final work will be fairly open-ended: the only wrong answers would be those which show a comprehensive lack of diligent attention to or interest in the course material.

Course Policies

I encourage you—but do not require you—to drop in ten minutes before our scheduled class times on Monday and Wednesday. I will be there early for casual conversation before we get started on our formal work for that session. During our synchronous meetings on Zoom, I would prefer if you keep your camera on but this is ultimately a decision I trust to you and I understand if you feel reluctant to do so.

I also understand that the relatively early EST time for our class meetings on Monday and Wednesday create a complicated burden for any students in PST or MST time zones, but I ask that if you have signed up for the class knowing in advance what time it is offered at that you do your best to manage that burden. Students in Hawaiian-Aleutian Standard Time may want to reconsider taking the class. I believe most other time zones can likely cope with taking the course. But if you have a time zone-related difficulty that you would like to talk to me about, I will be glad to discuss it.

If you are having serious connection issues that persist, please let me know as soon as possible and also inform the Dean’s Office so that the college can at least try to provide a solution. Because this semester will be graded, my ability to adjust my assessment in response to such circumstances is at least somewhat limited.

If you require other accommodations (please note that we have no timed exams this semester) please contact the Office of Disability Services at Swarthmore as soon as possible to discuss your needs or concerns.

My office hours will be Tuesday 9-11 and 1-4 this semester—I will maintain an open Zoom window during both of those times and I invite you drop in at any time to talk about anything. (Doesn't have to be about the course, even!) I will also be able to meet on Monday and Wednesday if necessary.

Week of Sept. 1-6

Watch introductory video on Moodle before the first class. (Asynchronous)

Mon Sept 7 (Synchronous)

What do you know already about South Africa? (And maybe don't know that you know?) (Zoom)

Wed. Sept 9 (Synchronous)

Live scavenger hunt: have an open browser up. (Zoom)

Profile video #1: Trevor Noah

Fri. Sept 11 (Asynchronous)

Lecture video #1 (15 minutes): White lies and apartheid myths about Southern Africa before 1400

Lecture video #2: (15 minutes): The challenges of pre-1400 historical research

Challenge video: Does the pre-1400 South African past matter to the present, especially if we can only know limited things about it? (Write 2-3 paragraph response in class Google doc by Sunday Sept 13 at the latest)

Monday Sept 14 (Synchronous)

The Portuguese and the Dutch East India Company to 1700 (Zoom)

Excerpts from Portuguese journals. (Moodle)

Excerpt from Jan van Riebeeck, journal. (Moodle)

Wednesday Sept 16 (Synchronous)

Khoikhoi Society and the VOC

Nigel Penn, The Forgotten Frontier, pp. 1-78 (Moodle)

Profile video #2: Eva/Krotoa

Friday September 18 (Asynchronous)

Lecture video #4: Freeburghers, Trekboers and the Cape frontier to 1800

Lecture video #5: Slavery in the Western Cape and the “Great Trek”

Lecture video #6: Anglo-Xhosa Wars and the Cattle-Killing

Challenge video: Theories of the cattle-killing (2-3 paragraphs in the class Google doc, by Sunday September 20 at the latest)

Monday September 21 (Synchronous)

State Formation in the 18th and 19th Century: How historians debate (Zoom)

Jill Kelly, *To Swim With Crocodiles* “Chief by the People”, pp. 3-15

Abstracts document

Short film selection: “Shaka Zulu” (Moodle)

Wednesday September 23 (Synchronous)

Natal Under British Rule (Zoom)

T.J. Tallie, *Queering Colonial Natal*, Chapter One (Moodle)

Nafisa Essop Sheik, “Customs in Common”

Tallie, “The Myth Is Dead! Give Us Our History!”

Profile video #3: Bishop John Colenso

Friday September 25 (Asynchronous)

Rhodes, Kimberley and the Witwatersrand

Lecture #7: Diamonds, Gold, Rhodes and the compound system

Lecture #8: Afrikaner Republics, the “new imperialism”, and the South African Wars

Lecture #9: City and Country: The Land Act and migrancy

Challenge video: Rhodes must fall? (2-3 paragraphs in the class Google doc, by Sunday 22 at the latest)

Monday September 28 (Synchronous)

The South African War (Zoom)

Van Onselen, "John Hays Hammond and the Jameson Raid Read as American Imperial History", in *The Cowboy Capitalist* (Moodle)

Mbenga, Land, Chiefs, Mining, Chapter 2 (Moodle)

Wednesday September 30 (Synchronous)

Towards apartheid after 1913 (Zoom)

Hellman, *Rooiyard* (Moodle)

Giliomee, "The Making of the Apartheid Plan" (Moodle)

Profile video #4: Kas Maine

Friday October 2 (Asynchronous)

Lecture #10: Institutionalizing racial capitalism

Lecture #11: White politics in the Union of South Africa

Lecture #12: The ANC, the ICU, the SACP and the Natal Indian Congress

Challenge video: Was Gandhi a racist? (2-3 paragraphs in class Google doc, by Sunday Oct 4 at latest)

Monday October 5 (Synchronous)

Social transformations in a segregated society I (Zoom)

Mokoena, "An Assembly of Readers" (Moodle)

"African Jim" (Link on Moodle)

First paper assignment distributed

Wed October 7 (Synchronous)

Social transformations in a segregated society II (Zoom)

Van Onselen, "The World the Mine Owners Made", pp. 24-43 (Moodle)

Breckenridge, "We Must Speak For Ourselves" (Moodle)

Profile video #5: Mzuzephi Nongoloza Mathebula

Friday October 9 (Asynchronous)

Lecture #13: 1948 and Afrikaner politics

Lecture #14: The establishment and early evolution of apartheid

Work on first paper assignment (No challenge video)

Monday October 12 (Synchronous)

Apartheid (Zoom)

Apartheid laws (Moodle)

Breckenridge, "Verwoerd's Bureau of Proof" (Moodle)

Posel, "Race as Common Sense" (Moodle)

Wednesday October 14 (Synchronous)

The ANC, SACP and the PAC from 1948 to 1960 (Zoom)

Shireen Hassim, *The ANC Women's League*, pp. 7-95 (Purchased book)

Profile video #6: Moses Kotane

Friday October 16 (Asynchronous)

Lecture #1: Apartheid, Nationalism and the Cold War

Lecture #2: Apartheid in perspective: the world and white supremacy in the 1960s

First paper due by 5pm Friday October 16 (No challenge video)

Monday October 19 (Synchronous)

The Armed Struggle (Zoom)

Nelson Mandela, "I Am Prepared to Die" (Moodle)

Operation Mayibuye plan (Moodle)

"Africanist News and Views", 1968 (Moodle)

Wednesday October 21 (Synchronous)

Life under apartheid #1 (Zoom)

Magaziner, *Art of Life in South Africa*, Ch. 1 and 6 (Moodle)

“Have You Seen Drum Recently?” (Link on Moodle)

Profile #7: Miriam Makeba

Friday October 23 (Asynchronous)

Life under apartheid #2

Lecture #1: District Six, Sophiatown and Soweto

Lecture #2: The homelands, the UDF and “ungovernability”

Challenge video: Decisions in the struggle (2-3 paragraphs on Google doc)

2nd paper assignment distributed

Monday October 26 (Synchronous)

Black consciousness and decoloniality (Zoom)

Biko, *I Write What I Like*. Introduction, pp. 1-53, pp. 99-137, pp. 143-153 (Purchased book)

Wednesday October 28 (Synchronous)

The last days of apartheid (Zoom)

Hassim, *ANC Women’s League*, 95-119 (Purchased book)

“Mapantsula” (Link on Moodle)

Profile #8: Chris Hani

Friday October 30 (Asynchronous)

Lecture #1: The negotiations

Lecture #2: The creation of a new South Africa

Work on second paper assignment (No challenge video)

Monday November 2 (Synchronous)

What apartheid wrought I (Zoom)

Jacob Dlamini, *The Terrorist Album* (Purchased book), pp. 1-99

Begin reading *Mail and Guardian; Daily Maverick*

Wednesday November 4 (Synchronous)

What apartheid wrought II (Zoom)

Dlamini, *The Terrorist Album*, pp. 100-190, 253-285

Profile #9: Eugene TerreBlanche

Friday November 6 (Asynchronous)

Lecture #1: Reconciliation, restoration and retribution

Lecture #2 Buthelezi, Inkatha and the “third force”

Challenge video: Did the TRC screw it up? (2 paragraphs in Google Doc, by Sunday November 8 5pm at the latest)

Monday November 9 (Synchronous)

South Africa Since Apartheid (Zoom)

Bundy, *Short-Changed?*, pp. 8-82 (Purchased book)

Wednesday November 11 (Synchronous)

South Africa Since Apartheid II (Zoom)

Bundy, *Short-Changed?* Pp. 83-157 (Purchased book)

Marikana video

Profile video #10: Mangosuthu Buthelezi

Friday November 13 (Asynchronous)

Lecture #1: The past of the South African present

2nd paper due, Friday 5pm

Begin reading for final exercise

Monday November 16 (Synchronous)

The HIV pandemic in South Africa (Zoom)

Jonny Steinberg, *Sizwe's Test*, selection (Moodle)

[Zachie Achmat profile, TIME, 2001](#)

Wednesday November 18 (Synchronous)

State Capture (Zoom)

Myburgh, *The Republic of Gupta*, selection (Moodle)

Profile video #11: Thuli Madonsela

Friday November 20 (Synchronous)

Xenophobia (Zoom)

Jason Hickel, "Xenophobia in South Africa" (Moodle)

Campus Departure: End of Regular Class Meetings

Final exercise, Part I

Dialogue #1: TJ Tallie

Dialogue #2: Keith Breckenridge

Dialogue #3: Jacob Dlamini

Dialogue #4: Shireen Hassim

In preparation for the week after Thanksgiving, you will be assigned one of these authors. Between your assignment and the week after Thanksgiving, you will:

- 1) Re-read the assigned work(s) of each author from the syllabus.
- 2) Read one additional (short) reading by each author (a list will be provided).
- 3) Read a profile of the author (website or other material as provided).
- 4) Compose two questions for an "Ask Me Anything" session focused on each author's work (both the work you specifically read and the author's professional career to date.)
- 5) We will hold 40-minute Zoom sessions with each author where your questions will be asked and we'll have some free time for discussion.

Final exercise, Part II (There will be a separate assignment sheet for these. This work will be due by December 15.)

- 1) Interpreting the South African news (2-3 pages)
- 2) Locating South Africa in modern history (2-3 pages)