



## Conceptualizing German Identity: From Colonial towards Post-Colonial Diversity

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Spring Term 2023: 8 February – 19 May 2023

### CATEGORY

Migration Studies and Sociology

### COURSE STRUCTURE

3 contact hours à 45 min per week (14 weeks)

### WEEKLY SCHEDULE

#### Time

Tuesday, 4:00 pm - 6:30 pm

#### Place

t.b.a.

### COURSE LANGUAGE

English

**Language requirements** (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)  
English B2

### TARGET GROUP

International exchange students of all subjects with a strong interest in the course topic. Humboldt Perspectives Study Abroad courses are designed for undergraduate students. Master students may participate if their home university agrees. This course is taught in English, including assigned readings will be in English. For the understanding of the texts and the discussions in class. The class will adapt to the range of English skills present. Class time will prioritize verbal skills in English, through speaking, engagement in discussions with fellow students, and conversations with invited guest lectures. Due to the sensitive nature of the course, students are encouraged to pause or clarify language used at any time. When possible, key terms will be gathered to build a growing lexicon of vocabulary. We will also address language's role in shaping thought and understanding within cultures.

## **CREDITS = 6 ECTS**

All courses are accredited according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

This course is designed to introduce students to the wide interdisciplinary perspective on diversity, politics of belonging and the status of citizenship of people within the African Diaspora in Berlin. Historically, the settlement of migrant groups and the formation of minority ethnic groups have changed the socio-cultural, political and economic fabric of receiving societies. As a result, the relationship between migration, social cohesion, and national German identity has become an increasingly contentious political issue. During the course, an emphasis will be given to specific readings of Steve Biko, W.E.B. Du Bois and Frantz Fanon as their work has had a profound impact on liberation struggles. These accounts of the politics, ideology, and cultures of colonialism as experienced by the colonized populations will provide students with an informed historical background of diasporic identity.

The course will travel through the hidden geography of the so-called Afrikanisches Viertel in Wedding and focus on issues around public space, monuments, and street names from the 1960s to the present day that have anchored German colonialism. We will consider the relationship between colonialism and white supremacy in Germany, whilst examining the ongoing debate around how German (Anti-)racism has been influenced by earlier colonial ideology and practice. We will turn to the resurgence of colonialism as a theme in recent literature and historiography and examine the state of play in contemporary (international) debates about the colonial past. Africa, in all of its cultural prosperity and diversity, remains alive in the receiving societies as the various ethnic groups created new cultures and recreated their old ways as much as circumstances allowed. Scholars engaging with the African diaspora must be wary not to homogenize the experiences of the diverse people within the diaspora. Whilst there are certain commonalities, there are also fundamental differences born of societal contexts and differing historical, political, economic, and racial circumstances.

Students are encouraged to the intentional notion of undoing – unlearning and dismantling unjust practices, assumptions, and institutions – as well as persistent action to create and build alternative spaces and ways of knowing, particularly concerning the Black (African) Diaspora. There will be ample examples from which students can draw to develop a toolbox of critical skills and historical examples through which to understand German colonialism and how it has become a determining factor in contemporary discussions of intersectional inequalities. Exploring these themes plays an important role in understanding the intricacies of how different forms of citizenship are experienced and negotiated by people within the African diaspora. Berlin will be used as a case study for themes covered, however, students are encouraged to reflect on their own identities and the expressions of various identities around the city. Students who engage thoroughly with course materials will come away with a basic understanding of Africans deep history, as well as a set of analytic tools that will help them to think about historical change more broadly. Class sessions will be composed of lectures, online discussions forums and guided excursion in Berlin, where we will address some important concepts of colonialism, decolonization, diversity, citizenship and the politics of belonging.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The objective of this Bachelor-level course is to equip students with an in-depth understanding of the complexities of being African in Berlin. Engage in discussion and information-sharing on the historical context of race and racism in Germany and its present day impacts on the (Black) African Diaspora. Placing experiences of race, class and gender at the centre of interpretation, "Conceptualizing German Identity: Race, Class and Gender" introduces basic concepts and perspectives of the Othering of Africans. Focusing on present-day issues (with reference to historical trends), we will examine lived experience with an emphasis on how people within the African Diaspora interacts with other identities. Students will be challenged throughout the semester to develop their own answers to some of these questions and develop their own thoughts and arguments through discussion, and writing. In addition, to understand and critically reflect on the most recent theoretical and empirical research as it relates to the B(b)lack body. It will enable students to read, understand and critically reflect on how we view people within the African Diaspora and deepen our understanding of citizenship, diversity, belonging, and diasporic identities.

In order to achieve their academic goals, by the end of the course, students stand to gain: This course aims to provide students with the necessary knowledge and tools which will allow them to understand and critically position themselves within the themes discussed in course.

The aim is to have students:

- **Understand, describe** and **explain** key ideas and concepts concerning the social construction of race and ethnicity
- **Explain** how anti-Black racism acts institutionally, structurally, interpersonally and individually
- Understanding the endemic nature of Anti-Black racism in German society
- Critically discuss the meanings of B (b)lackness and whiteness in modern German history.
- Critically discuss with sophistication the uses of primary and secondary sources.
- Different intersections of negotiation (One's) German identity
- **Articulate** and **critically** examine personal beliefs and opinions about race, class and gender
- **Identify** and **describe** the differences between multicultural and anti-racist education
- Demonstrate understanding of the **impact** of implicit bias, micro-aggressions, and in society

and acquire the following skills and competencies:

- Producing assignments in different forms including presentations, mini-literature reviews, research proposals, and critical response questions that require students to reflect on assigned readings, lectures, and their lived experience.
- Integrating knowledge from different disciplines in order to develop a new understanding on issues of race, racism, colonialism, intersectionality, inequity and how people within the African diaspora are portrayed within German society.
- Apply relevant theories and concepts to engage in self-reflexively with constructs of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexuality, nationality.
- Reflect on the applicability of Eurocentric categories/concepts for describing Africans
- Recognize the different procedures by which scholars engaging with aspects of Africa identify sources, collect evidence, and draw conclusions.

## READINGS

Adonis, C. K., & Silinda, F. (2021). Institutional culture and transformation in higher education in post-1994 South Africa: a critical race theory analysis. *Critical African Studies*, 13(1), 73-94.

Aitken, R., & Aitken, R.J.M. (2007). *Exclusion and Inclusion Gradations of Whiteness and Socio-economic Engineering in German Southwest Africa, 1884-1914*. Peter Lang.

Bazana, S., & Mogotsi, O. P. (2017). Social Identities and Racial Integration in Historically White Universities: A Literature Review of the Experiences of Black Students. *Transformation in Higher Education*, 2, 25.

Chinua Achebe, "An Image of Africa," in *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Special Issue on Literary Criticism (Spring, 1978), 1-15.

Cyril K. Adonis & Fortunate Silinda (2021): Institutional culture and transformation in higher education in post-1994 South Africa: a critical race theory analysis, *Critical African Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/21681392.2021.1911448

<https://africanarguments.org/2016/06/07/where-is-the-african-in-african-studies/>

<https://africasacountry.com/2012/11/why-does-south-african-history-continue-to-be-written-primarily-by-white-scholars>

<https://africasacountry.com/2015/03/open-letter-to-60-minutes-regarding-its-reporting-on-africa>

<https://africasacountry.com/2015/04/the-postcolonial-problem>

<https://africasacountry.com/2018/03/what-are-the-politics-of-colonial-memory-in-germany>

<https://africasacountry.com/2019/08/there-is-no-africa-in-african-studies>

<https://www.dw.com/en/whats-life-really-like-for-black-people-in-germany/a-53159443>

[https://www.humanityinaction.org/knowledge\\_detail/facing-the-past-to-liberate-the-future-colonial-africa-in-the-german-mind/](https://www.humanityinaction.org/knowledge_detail/facing-the-past-to-liberate-the-future-colonial-africa-in-the-german-mind/)

Jürgen Zimmerer: Annihilation in Africa: the "race war" in German Southwest Africa (1904–1908) and its significance for a global history of genocide.

Letsekha, T. (2013). Revisiting the debate on the Africanisation of higher education: An appeal for a conceptual shift. *The Independent Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 8(1), 5-18.

Luvalo, L. M. (2019). Relationship between transformation and institutional culture. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 33(1), 184-199.

Mampane, R. M., Omidire, M. F., & Aluko, F. R. (2018). Decolonising higher education in Africa: Arriving at a global solution. *South African Journal of Education*, 38(4).

Oyekan Owomoyela. 1994. "With Friends like These... A Critique of Pervasive Anti-Africanisms in Current African Studies Epistemology and Methodology," *African Studies Review*. 37(3): 77-101.

Plantation Memories Episodes of Everyday Racism Grada Kilomba, Chapter 5

Priyamvada Gopal: On Decolonisation and the University:  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0950236X.2021.1929561>

Terre Blanche, M., Fourie, E., & Segalo, P. (2020). Teaching community psychology decolonially: A pedagogical journey. *Review of General Psychology*, 1089268020974588.

Wainaina, Binyavanga. 2005. "How to Write About Africa." Granta. London: Granta Publications.  
<https://granta.com/how-to-write-about-africa/>

## ASSIGNMENT INFO

### Workload and assignments

In order to be granted 5 ECTS, participants will be asked to

- actively attend all sessions (a minimum of 75% attendance is required for classroom and online sessions)
- prepare and revise the classroom/online sessions
- hand in the following **assignments**:
  - **Positionality Paper:** The first step in creating social change is to become fluent in your own history and to understand your stand point epistemology and social location. This is the goal of your first assignment. You will engage in an analytical discussion of how your identities interact with social forces. In particular, you will centrally address how intersectionality, oppression, privilege, and social constructions affect your life and inform your experiences.

This short paper asks you to understand your own relationship to the topics that will be covered in this course.

- **Critical Response Question/ Literature Review:** Literature review are designed to encourage scholars to critical analyse academic work. The object of a mini Literature Review article is to highlight a particular topic or series of linked topics; highlighting where the gaps are in the literature; and highlighting where there are areas for research development.
- **Questionnaire:** In order to foster cooperative learning and an in-depth study of a particular topic of interest, students will take-part in a questionnaire related to the topics covered in the course.
- **Class Excursion:** Reflection paper on the Class Excursion
- **Final Assignment:** Each student must submit an essay or an extensive literature review on a topic related to the topics covered in the seminar. This should be between 1800-2000 words. All topics must be approved by the instructor before as they should be relevant to the course. In addition, take-part in a questionnaire on topics related to the course.

Failure to fulfil one of the mentioned components results in failure of the class.

### Assessment Components

The final grade will be composed of the above-mentioned assignments.

## YOUR INSTRUCTOR

### **Azakhiwe Nocanda-Höhling**

I am a (Xhosa) South African doctoral candidate at the Institute for Asian and African Studies at Humboldt University, Berlin in collaboration with the University of Pretoria, South Africa. My Ph.D. research focuses on the intersection of class, race, gender and ethnicity in the Othering of Africans in the context of Migration. I obtained my M.A in Sociology and graduated with Merit from the University of Glasgow (Scotland). In addition, I hold a joint Master of Arts in Social Sciences from the Global Studies Programme at the Institute for Sociology at Albert-Ludwig University of Freiburg (Germany) and the University of Cape Town (South Africa). My research interest includes Black Consciousness, African migration, intersectional inequalities and racial injustices and cultural relativism.

As an instructor teaching in the third space, my goal is to encourage my students to open their minds to other ways of knowing the world and recognize that in doing so. The African continent and the ancestral homeland must be central to any informed analysis and understanding of the dispersal of its people. Recent exposure and the rising number of discussions about the different dimensions of racism and different types of discrimination experienced by people within the African Diaspora have reaffirmed that while racial prejudices often exist unconsciously, they need to be understood and challenged to ensure an informed anti-racist stance is adopted. Africa, in all of its cultural prosperity and diversity, remains alive in the receiving societies as the various ethnic groups created new cultures and recreated their old ways as circumstances allowed. During the course I provide a variety of methods for learning during class and provide ample opportunity for students to demonstrate their learning.

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## COURSE SCHEDULE

### **Week 1: Introduction**

**Required Reading:** Ungubani; Who are you?

**Group activity / assignment:**

Part I: Introductions of instructor and students

Part II: Review of the syllabus and assignments

**Week 2: Terms and Conditions: why is it crucial to locate the 'African' in African Studies?**

In the first part of this session, students will further their understanding of historical, social and intellectual construction of race within Germany and around the world; its origins and relation to African colonialism; and the underlying reasons behind the social construction of race.

In the second part;

"It is clear that those who produce knowledge about something wield considerable power over it. In this vein, African Studies remains a colonized space rife with misrepresentation, homogenization and essentialising about Africa"

(Pailey, 2016).

**Required Reading Part I:**

Haney López, I. F. (1994). The social construction of race. In Richard Delgado (Ed.) *Critical Race Theory: The cutting edge* (pp. 191-203). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University.

**Required Reading Part II:**

Oyekan Owomoyela. 1994. "With Friends like These... A Critique of Pervasive Anti-Africanisms in Current African Studies Epistemology and Methodology," *African Studies Review*. 37(3): 77-101.

Wainaina, Binyavanga. 2005. "How to Write About Africa." *Granta*. London: Granta Publications. <https://granta.com/how-to-write-about-africa/>

**Group activity / assignment:** To be announced on Moodle

**Week 3: Reading Week I**

**Group activity / assignment:** To be announced on Moodle

**Due:** To be announced on Moodle



**Week 4: Hidden Curriculum: Colonialism hiding in plain sight**

**Required Reading:**

Jürgen Zimmerer: Annihilation in Africa: the "race war" in German Southwest Africa (1904–1908) and its significance for a global history of genocide.

<https://africasacountry.com/2018/03/what-are-the-politics-of-colonial-memory-in-germany>

**Group activity / assignment:** Critical response questions in preparation for this week's class

**Due:** To be announced on Moodle

**Week 5: (in) Visible Black History of Berlin: African or Colonial Quarter?**

**\*Class Excursion**

We will then explore the influences/traces of German colonialism on the African continent.

**Group activity / assignment:** Reflection Paper

**Due:** To be announced on Moodle and Doodle

**Week 6: Reading Week II**

**Group activity / assignment:** To be announced on Moodle

**Due:** To be announced on Moodle

**Week 7: Thinking critically about written representations of B(b)lack Germans**

The aim of the session is to encourage participants to think more critically about representations of migrant experiences.

**Group activity / assignment:** Museum Exhibition: zurückgeschaut / looking back exhibition

**Due:** To be announced on Moodle and via Doodle

**Week 8: Reading Week Part III**

**Group activity / assignment:** To be announced on Moodle

**Due:** To be announced on Moodle

**Week 9: Decolonize: Rethinking institutional culture in higher education: The Lesson from South Africa Part**

**Required Reading:**

Cyril K. Adonis & Fortunate Silinda (2021): Institutional culture and transformation in higher education in post-1994 South Africa: a critical race theory analysis, *Critical African Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/21681392.2021.1911448

Bazana, S., & Mogotsi, O. P. (2017). Social Identities and Racial Integration in Historically White Universities: A Literature Review of the Experiences of Black Students. *Transformation in Higher Education*, 2, 25.

**Group activity / assignment:** Write up a review of the required reading [SEP]

**Due:** To be announced on Moodle

**Week 10: Identity and Belonging: conceptualisations German identity**

What makes up German identity? Can Black/African people be German? How often is your nationality questioned? How often do you have to defend your nationality to others (Personally)? When you think of a 'German person' what comes to mind? The negotiation of citizenship.

**Required Reading:**

Plantation Memories Episodes of Everyday Racism Grada Kilomba, Chapter 5 and 11

<https://africasacountry.com/2015/04/the-postcolonial-problem>

<https://www.dw.com/en/whats-life-really-like-for-black-people-in-germany/a-53159443>

**Group activity / assignment:** To be announced on Moodle

**Due:** To be announced on Moodle

**Week 11: Feminist (ing) while African**

This session of the course is aimed at introducing and framing African feminism in various contexts and how it intersects with patriarchy, culture and religion. It will explore Feminisms from an African-Feminist perspective to include a multitude of Black women's voices.

We will address the ways in which global feminism provides a space for women to describe their conditions from their own cultural and historical contexts and strengthens the foundation and development of a global intersectional feminist community. For African (Black) women writers around the world, and for women who tell their own stories, the engagement with Blackness, Germaness and feminism adds to a culture of survival and resistance.

**Required Reading:** These will be made available to students

**Group activity / assignment:** Guest Lecture

**Week 12: (Anti-) Racism in Germany**

Many of people in Europe belonging to the African Diaspora (Black Europeans and People of African Descent) face specific forms of racism - Afrophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and xenophobia. These forms of racism have also been shaped by Europe's history of colonial and repeated persecutions against minorities within Germany. Racism and its specific forms continue to be prevalent, ranging from very brutal acts of violence or harassment to extremely sophisticated forms of discrimination, instrumentalising Fundamental Rights to exclude minorities.

**Required Reading:** These will be made available to students

**Group activity / assignment:** To be announced on Moodle

**Week 13: Re (imagine) African (s): Where do we go from here?**

## TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Registration on Moodle (HU's e-learning platform)

### in case of online sessions

- Fully functional device (laptop, tablet, PC)
- Stable internet connection
- Software: Zoom (video/audio)
- *Recommended* hardware: external headset for better sound quality

## EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES

**Preparation for lively discussions:** be on time, have at least the required readings completed, and points in mind for discussion or clarification.

**Assignments:** complete all assignments according to the specified requirements on the schedule including handing them over to the lecturer.

**Commitment:** pay particular attention to the lecturer and respect differences of opinions (classmates', lecturers).

**Academic guidelines:** Comply with academic integrity policies (such as no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical) especially the academic honor code and the student code of conduct.

**Attendance policy:** Students must contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work – to excuse absence please contact the lecturer.

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The course and its syllabus are subject to change. Last update: 20<sup>th</sup> April 2022