

Ben Gurion University of the Negev
Faculty for Humanities and Social Science

Youth in Africa

2023

Second Semester, Sunday 18:15-19:45, Online

Lecturer: Dr. Noa Levy, noa2@post.bgu.ac.il

Africa is the youngest continent in the world with more than half of its population in the ages of 0-24, and above 250 million over the age of 15. While populations around the world are aging, young people in Africa are shaping the face of the future. In this course, we will discuss contemporary aspects in youth's lives, focusing on the shaping of youth within global, national, and local contexts. We will critically engage with theoretical frameworks from within and outside the continent, and explore the structural challenges and the coping mechanism young people face in the formation of their place within families, communities and countries.

Course Requirements:

Attendance, reading & active participation – obligatory

Joint assignment – 30%

Final Paper – 70%

Weekly Meetings: (Subject to Change)

Part 1: Questions of Childhood and Youth

March 5, week 1: Introduction

- Abbink, Jon (2005). Being young in Africa: The politics of despair and renewal. In, Jon Abbink and Ineke van Kessel (eds.). *Vanguards or Vandals: Youth, politics and conflict in Africa*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 1-34.

March 12, week 2: The problem(s) with Youth Studies

- James, Allison, and James, Adrian (2004) *Constructing childhood: Theory, policy, and social practice*. Palgrave Macmillan. Introduction + Chapter 1.
- Cooper, Adam, Swartz, Sharlene, and Mahali, Alude (2019) Disentangled, decentred and democratised: Youth Studies for the global South. *Journal of Youth Studies* 22(1): 29-45.

March 19, week 3: Waithood

- Honwana, Alcinda M. (2008) *The time of Youth: Work, Social Change, and Politics in Africa*. Boulder & London: Kumarian Press. Chapter 1 & 2.

Part 2: Work

March 26, week 4: Making ends meet

- Mwaura, Grace Muthoni (2017) Just farming? Neoliberal subjectivities and agricultural livelihoods among educated youth in Kenya. *Development and Change* 48(6): 1310-1335.

April 16, week 5: Gendered negotiations

- Boehm, Christian (2006). Industrial labour, marital strategy and changing livelihood trajectories among young women in Lesotho. In, Catrine Christiansen, Mats Utas and Henrik E. Vigh (eds.), *Navigating Youth, Generating Adulthood: Social Becoming in an African Context*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 153-182.

April 23, week 6: Aspirations

- Dubinsky, Itamar and Schler, Lynn (2019) Goal dreams: Conflicting development imaginaries in Ghanaian football academies. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 57(2): 247-272.
- Henrik Vigh (2009) Wayward Migration: On Imagined Futures and Technological Voids. *Ethnos* 74(1): 91-109.

Part 3: Civil Society

April 30, week 7: Development

- Jike, V. Teddy (2004) Environmental degradation, social disequilibrium, and the dilemma of sustainable development in the Niger-Delta of Nigeria. *Journal of Black Studies* 34(5): 686-701.

May 7, week 8: Higher education

- Mupotsa, Danai S. (2018) A Question of Power. In, Elina Oinas, Henri Onodera and Leena Suurpää (eds.), *What Politics? Youth in a Globalizing World*, Volume 6. Brill, 23-41
- Bennett, Jane (2002) Exploration of a “Gap”: Strategising gender equity in African universities. *Feminist Africa* 1: 34-63.

May 14, week 9: Political participation

- Kamau, Samuel C. (2017) Democratic engagement in the digital age: youth, social media and participatory politics in Kenya. *Communicatio* 43(2): 128-146.

Part 4: Politics

May 21, week 10: Armed conflicts

- Abdullah, Ibrahim (1998) Bush path to destruction: The origin and character of the Revolutionary United Front/Sierra Leone. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 36(2), 203-235.

May 28, week 11: Generational dynamics

- Rich-Dorman, Sarah (2005) Narratives of Nationalism in Eritrea: research and revisionism. *Nations and Nationalism* 11(2): 203-222

June 4, week 12: The grasp of the State

- Mhike, Ivo (2017) Political violence in Zimbabwe’s national youth service, 2001–2007. In, Elina Oinas, Henri Onodera and Leena Suurpää (eds.), *What Politics? Youth in a Globalizing World*, Volume 6. Brill, 246-264.

June 11, week 13: Summary

Enjoy the semester!