AFRI 4000 A/HIST 4703A: THE HISTORICAL TRAJECTORY OF AFRICAN: THE IMPERATIVE OF IDENTITY AND ADAPTATION

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This course examines the evolutionary patterns of naming among Africans on the continent and the diaspora. It analyses the historical, ideological and sociocultural imperatives that shaped and are reshaping African naming and the resultant institutionalization of identity and adaptation. The trajectory of African naming from traditional times through the epochs of slavery, colonialism and the influence of world religions on the practice of naming of Africans and by Africans will be explicated in this course. Specific examples that illuminate considerations that go into names will be studied and discussed, as well as the analysis of readings and videos. A major objective of the course is to offer sound theoretical basis for the analysis of the continually evolving phenomenon of African naming on the continent and through migratory patterns and the mix of the global culture. Additionally, the course seeks to promote the appreciation of African naming as products of complex systemic formations with wide ranges of communicative meaning. The course will conclude by assessing the impact of globalization, youth cultures, diaspora, and the social media age on contemporary practices of naming in Africa.