



Call for applications

Master Class by Dr. Ndongo Samba Sylla

Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence, University of Bayreuth, Germany

“Rethinking Democracy & Economic Liberation in Post-Independence Africa”

02-04 May 2022, Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 3, Bayreuth Room S 18

CONTENT

The Master Class will revolve around the political economy of post-independence Africa, namely how African countries – states, ruling classes and ordinary citizens - have tried to deal both with colonial legacies and with the constraints of a changing world economic order.

The Master class consists of three days (5 hours each). For each session, the time allocation is the following in order to allow enough time for discussion with students and between them:

- Around 1 hour presentation by Dr. Ndongo Samba Sylla
- Around 2 hours discussion with the students
- In the afternoon, 2 hours of feedback on selected PhD projects.

PARTICIPATION

The participation in this Master Class is free of charge. Participants to the Master Class will be selected on the basis of their research project, namely whether they are interested in Africa, especially from a political economy perspective, and on their interest in exploring alternative intellectual frameworks relevant to the study of the African context.



APPLICATION

This class is open to Master and PhD students in all social sciences (Economics, Political Science, International Political Economy, Geography, History, Anthropology, etc.).

Applicants are invited to send a letter of motivation and Curriculum Vitae at the following email address: bigsas-application@uni-bayreuth.de

The deadline for application is 10th of April 2022 - Applicants will be notified on 13th of April 2022.

Session Day 1: Democracy in post-independence Africa: beyond Eurocentric accounts, the contested meanings of political legitimacy

Session 1 will address “democracy in post-independence Africa”, a topic that is attracting a renewed interest following the “upsurge” of military coups in West Africa during the last two years (Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso). The lecture will stress the need to go beyond mainstream accounts of democracy and political legitimacy - as they stem from a normative Eurocentric framework – by unpacking their contested meanings, especially in the context of “choiceless democracies”.

In this session, students are asked to read the American Federal Constitution (https://www.senate.gov/civics/constitution_item/constitution.htm) and to look for the words “democracy” and “democratic”. It is expected to interpret their findings with the help of the reading material that will be sent to them following acceptance. The first hour will be an exchange about their findings and interpretations. The second hour will be devoted to Dr. Ndong Samba Syllas presentation. The last hour will focus on Q&A.

Session Day 2: Africa in the global economic order: from the 1980's Structural Adjustment plans to the covid-19 pandemic.

Session 2 will focus on the African continent's place in the global economic order from the 1980s structural adjustment plans to the covid-19 pandemic. The lecture will offer a critical discussion of three successive views that epitomizes the evolving mainstream consensus on



Africa: “Africa marginalized” (1990- mid 2000), “Africa rising” (mid 2000-2019), “post-pandemic recovery” (2020...).

This session will be divided in three parts. Dr. Ndongo Samba Sylla will open the first hour with the “Africa marginalized” view, which will be followed by exchanges and Q & A. The second and third hours, the same strategy will be used respectively with the “Africa rising” and “post-pandemic recovery” views.

Session Day 3: Revisiting African Economic and Monetary Sovereignty through the lens of Modern Monetary Theory (MMT)

Session 3 will be an invite to rethink African economic and monetary sovereignty through the lens of the heterodox economics approach called Modern Monetary Theory (MMT). As MMT emphasizes the key role that governments issuing a sovereign currency can play to ensure full-employment, the lecture will explore how MMT could inform alternative economic policies beneficial to African populations and economies.

The first hour will be devoted to a presentation of MMT as an analytic framework followed by Q & A. For the remaining two hours, the discussion about MMT as a potential guide for development policy in the Global South, namely in Africa, will be introduced. Dr. Ndongo Samba Sylla will organize a pros and cons exercise around the following questions: Is MMT a useful lens when it comes to tackle development challenges in Africa? What are the possible benefits/limitations of a policy strategy informed by MMT?