

AAS/HIS 204 Fall 2009

Modern African History

Instructor: Brian J. Yates, PhD

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Office: Rice 14

Office Hours:

Wednesdays: 9am – 11am, 1pm – 3pm

Or by appointment

This course is designed to inform students on the historical background of the present social, economic and political in Africa. This course will begin with the widespread interactions of West and East Africa with the Major Islamic powers on the eve of European penetration in the 16th century and cover a period through 1970s. Student research presentations will take us to the present. There will be several case studies given in the class which represent some of extremely varied African experiences with modernity. In this course you will receive a very general understanding of modern African history that can be used as a foundation for further inquiry. The class will test critical thinking, effective communication and reading comprehension. Knowledge of the rest of the world is essential in becoming an informed citizen, student and adult and this class will be an important part of this lifelong journey.

Required Readings

Gilbert, Erik and Jonathan T. Reynolds, *Africa in World History: From Prehistory to the Present, 2nd Edition*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2007.

Tsitsi Dangarembga *Nervous Conditions* London: The Women's Press, 1988.

Chinua Achebe, *A Man of the People*. New York: Anchor Books, 1989.

Modern African History Course Reader (available on blackboard)

Recommended Readings

For a concise introduction of African history see John Parker and Richard Rathbone *African History: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Also, Gilbert and Reynolds have a good list of readings at the end of each chapter. In addition, I list some works at the end of each week's lecture topics. If you desire to learn more about any of the topics discussed in lecture, discussion or the research presentations please see me during office hours and I can provide you with some additional sources.

Course Requirements:

Class Participation 30% (Participation 10%, Responses and Attendance 10%, Discussion Sessions 10%)

Quiz 5%

Midterm Exam 15%

Essay (approx. 5 – 7 pgs.) 15%

Research Paper and Presentation 15%
Final Exam 20%

Explanation of Requirements

Papers:

There is one essay and one research paper for this course. A handout will be provided explaining the requirements. The essay will be due after Week ten and the research paper on the date of your presentation. Late papers will not be accepted unless accompanied with documentation from the Emergency Dean or the student health center.

Research Paper and Presentation

Early in the semester you will choose an African nation and theme not extensively covered during lecture and give an oral presentation (10-15 minutes) to the class introducing the area or topic to the class using general themes in the history of this area or topic from Independence until the present. Unlike the essay, **You must use and present at least two (2) primary sources.** If you are having trouble finding primary sources please come by my office and I will help you find appropriate primary sources. A handout outlining the requirements of the paper and presentation will be provided when you choose the nation after the second week of classes.

Attendance

Come to class on time. Class time is limited and tardiness not only distracts your classmates, but also increases the likelihood of missing important information.

Three (3) late arrivals = one (1) unexcused absence.

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class and **three (3) unexcused absences will result in a one (1) letter lowering of your grade.**

Participation

In order to be successful in this course, you must actively participate in the section discussions. This includes reading all assignments (in the textbook, sourcebook and course website) and coming to class ready to discuss the assigned readings.

Good participation is displayed by comments or questions that are relevant to lecture or discussion session topics and are informed by the assigned readings.

You can also earn extra participation points by attending pertinent lectures that will be announced during class.

Responses

Throughout the semester a discussion question will be assigned and you will write and hand in a one (1) page response to a question given in class the week before by email. In addition, on

occasion, using Blackboard (<http://oncampus.oberlin.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>), a question will also be posted (Occasionally, during the weeks where there is not an assigned response paper, every student will prepare three (3) questions for discussion during the section. These questions will come from assigned readings and will relate to theoretical issues in the readings.

Even if you are absent from the session (excused or unexcused) you are still required to hand in these responses or questions by email **BEFORE** the session meeting (10:45am). If there is minimal oral participation during session meetings, there will be additional response paper assignments.

Classroom Conduct

During the section meetings, there will many opportunities for you to express yourself orally. In order to allow a fluid exchange of ideas, **everyone's opinion will be respected.** You are welcome to disagree with your classmates' views on certain issues; however, personal attacks, rude comments or disrespectful behavior of any type will not be condoned and will be detrimental to your participation grade.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

The Oberlin Honor Code applies to all assignment for this course. This code can be found through Blackboard → Lookup/Directories → Honor Code. On assignments and tests you turn in for this course, the honor pledge and your signature must be present. The pledge is as follows: "I affirm that I have adhered to the honor pledge in this assignment." All tests are closed book, closed notes and closed "friend." For the exams, signing the honor pledge signifies that you have abided by those restrictions and neither given nor received aid during the exam. The essay and research paper are to be written without assistance, but as always you are encouraged to discuss your idea with others.

Students with Disabilities

If you have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities that require accommodations (such as a note taker or special testing arrangements), please let the instructor know early in the semester so your learning needs can be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to Ms. Jane Boomer, Coordinator for Services for Students with Disabilities. Her office is in Peters G-38A and her phone number is x58464

Email Policy

I will respond to emails within 24 hours from Monday – Friday, and within 48 hours on the weekends. It is a requirement to check your email and blackboard for announcements for this class. If I do not respond within 24 hours, send another email reminding me to respond.

Schedule of Lectures and Assignments

Unit 1: Setting the Stage: Africa Before the Age of Imperialism (1500-1800)

Week One: Islam, Trade and Slavery

Assigned Readings: Chap. 6 (Gilbert and Reynolds) and Course Reader Nehemia Levtzion “Islam in the Bilal al-Sudan to 1800,” Ivor Wilks “The Juula and the Expansion of Islam into the Forest” and Ibn Battuta

8/31 Introduction: What is Modern Africa?

9/2 The “Islamification” of Africa

9/4 The “Africanisation” of Islam

Further Readings: Levtzion ed. *The History of Islam in Africa*, David Robinson *Muslim Societies in African History*, Albert Hourani *The History of the Arab Peoples* and Bernard Lewis *The Middle East* (G+R also present more recent further readings at the end of each chapter)

Week Two: Christianity, Trade and Slavery

Assigned Readings: Chap. 7 (G+R), Course Reader Lidwien Kapteijns “Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa,” Randall L. Pouwels “The East African Coast, c. 780 to 1900 C.E.,” Selections from the *Kebra Nagast*, and documents from the *Human Record*.

9/7 No Class: Labor Day

9/9 Trade Routes and Christianity in East Africa in the era before Imperialism/ Ibn Batutu
Response due

9/11 Christianity and Trade Routes in North and West Africa in the era before Imperialism

Further Readings: BA Ogot and JA Kieran eds. *Zamani: A Survey of East African History*, Murray Gordon *Slavery in the Arab World*, Richard Gray and David Birmingham eds. *Pre-Colonial African Trade: Essays on Trade in Central and Eastern Africa before 1900* and John Ralph Willis ed. *Slaves and Slavery in Muslim Africa Vols. I and II*

Choose country and theme for essay and research presentation

Unit 2: Slavery and Imperialism in the North/South/East/West

Week Three: Slavery and the internal and external African Diaspora

Assigned Readings: Chapter 8 (G+R) Course Reader: Michael Gomez “Introduction Diasporic Africa: A view from History”, João José Reis “*Batuque*: African Drumming

and Dance between Repression and Concession: Bahia, 1808-1855” -or- James Sweet
 “The Evolution of Ritual in the African Diaspora: Central African Kilundu in Brazil, St.
 Dominique, and the United States, Seventh-Nineteenth Centuries”

9/14 Christianity in West Africa until the 19th century

9/16 The Slave Trade and the African Diaspora

9/18 DISCUSSION: Understanding Slavery in the European/African and American contexts

Further Reading: Joseph Harris ed. *The Global Dynamics of the African Diaspora*,
 Michael Gomez *Reversing Sail: A History of the African Diaspora*, Joseph Miller *Way of
 Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830* and Orlando
 Patterson *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*

Week Four: North and West Africa: the Frontlines between Christianity and Islam

Assigned Readings: Chap. 9 and Chap. 10 (G+R) and Course Reader Ivor Wilks
 “Kumase and the Southern provinces: The Politics of Control (G+R), Knut S. Vikør “Sufi
 Brotherhoods in Africa” and Dan Fodio readings

9/21 Background to North Africa

9/23 Islamic Resistance

9/25 Discussion Comparing West and North Africa/ Quiz

Further Readings: Ivor Wilks *Asante in the nineteenth century: The Structure and
 evolution of a political order* and P.M. Holt *The Mahdist State in the Sudan, 1881-1898*

Week Five: East Africa: Ridding the Trade routes of Islam

Assigned Readings: Chap. 11 (G+R) and Course Reader Sven Rubenson “Adwa 1896:
 The Resounding Protest”

9/28 No Class: Yon Kippur

9/30 The Swahili Coast and Ethiopia

10/2 FILM: Haile Gerima Sellassie’s *Adwa*

Further Readings: Sven Rubenson *Survival of Ethiopian Independence* and Robert I.
 Rotberg and Ali A. Mazrui *Protest and Power in Black Africa*

Week Six: Building Empires to Defeat them Assigned Readings Chap. 12 (G+R)

10/5 Finish *Adwa* and begin Scramble for Africa

10/7 Continue Scramble for Africa

10/9 Optional Catchup Day -or- Discussion on Adwa/ Scramble of Africa

Further Readings: Thomas Pakenham *The Scramble for Africa* and Eric Hobsbawn *Age of
 Empires*

Week Seven: Film, Review and Midterm

10/11 FILM: Shaka Zulu (1986)
10/13 Review/ Finish Shaka Zulu
10/15 Midterm

Further Readings (or films): The rest of *Shaka Zulu* series

Fall Recess 10/17-10/25

Unit 3: Colonialism

Week Eight: The Legacy of Slavery

Assigned Readings: Chap. 13 (G+R) and Course Reader Adam Hochschild “The First Heretic,” “Where there Aren’t No Ten Commandments” and “Meeting Mr. Kurtz”

10/26 General Legacies of Slavery
10/28 Congolese Legacies of Slavery
10/30 DISCUSSION Legacies of Slavery

Further Reading: Jan Georg Deutsch *Emancipation without Abolition in German East Africa c. 1884-1914*, Suzanne Miers and Richard Roberts eds. *The End of Slavery in Africa* and Howard Temperley ed. *After Slavery: Emancipation and its Discontents*

Week Nine: The Colonial Economy

Assigned Readings: Chap. 14 (G+R) and Course Reader Jean Allman “Serving a Man is Wasted Labor: Woman’s Conjugal Strategies in a World of Cash and Cocoa”

11/02 The European Sides
11/04 The African Sides
11/06 Developments during the Colonial Period

Further Readings: Martin Klein *Slavery and Colonial Rule in French West Africa*, Irving Leonard Markowitz ed. *African Politics and Society* (Parts I and II) and John Iliffe *Tanganyika under German Rule, 1905-1912*

Week Ten: Political Upheaval on the eve of Independence

Assigned Readings: Chap. 15 (G+R) and Course Reader excerpts from Aime Cessaire *Discourse on Colonialism* and Frantz Fanon’s *Wretched of the Earth*

11/1 Understanding Colonialism Psychological Effects
11/3 Understanding Colonialism Social Effects
11/5 DISCUSSION Colonialism

Essay is Due

Unit 4: Global and Post Independence Africa

Week Eleven: Gendered Africa

Assigned Reading: Tsitsi Dangarembga *Nervous Conditions*

11/8 *Nervous Conditions* Part One (Chapters 1 - 6) DISCUSSION

11/10 *Nervous Conditions* Part Two (Chapters 6 – end) DISCUSSION

11/12 Lumumba FILM

Further Readings: Jean Allman *I Will Not Eat Stone: A Woman's History of Ghana*, Judy Olmstead *A Woman Between Two Worlds*, Lahoucine Ouzgane and Robert Morrell eds. *African Masculinities: Men in Africa from the Late 19th Century to the Present*, Mariama Ba *So Long a Letter* and Ifi Amadiume *Male Daughters, Female Husbands: Gender and Sex in an African Society*

Week Twelve: Decolonization:

Assigned Readings (G+R) Chap. 16 and Course Readings from, Amilcral Cabral, Julius Neyerere, Kwame Nkrumah and Patrice Lumumba

11/15 1st Wave Non Violent

11/17 2nd Wave Violent Uprising

11/19 Free Period (Work on Presentation)

Further Readings: Michael Crowder *West African Resistance: The military response to colonial occupation*, Patrick Chabal *Amilcar Cabral: Revolutionary Leadership And People's War*, Jean Allman *Quills of a Porcupine*, Kwame Nkrumah *Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* and Julius Neyerere *Ujaama*

Week Thirteen: Pessimism in the post Independence Age:

Assigned Readings Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People* and Course Reader: excerpts from Ieuan Griffiths *The African Inheritance*

11/22 The Limits of the Corruption Thesis/ Positives and Negatives of Modern Africa

11/24 Discussion of Achebe's *AMOTP* or beginning of presentations.

11/26 Free Period Thanksgiving (Work on Presentation)

Further Readings: Basil Davidson's *The Black Man's Burden*, Ayi Kwei Armah *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* and Immanuel Wallerstein *Africa and the Modern World*

Week Fourteen: Africa of Today

Assigned Readings (G+R) Chap. 18
Continuation of Presentations

11/29 Presentations
12/02 Presentations
12/04 Presentations

Week Fifteen: Review and Final Exam

12/07 Presentations
12/09 Presentations
12/11 Review -or- last of the presentations

Week Sixteen: **Final Exam December 15th, 2009 9:00am - 11:00am**