

History 610
Africa to c.1830
Prof. Trevor Getz



A lukasa: An encoded 'map' of family, society, history and space made by a Luba Artisan

“Africa has a history. Unfortunately, for far too long, little was known about it and the little that was known was misunderstood... the history of Africa, like the history of mankind as a whole, is really the story of an awakening. That story needs rewriting, for it has been considerably distorted by ignorance or self-interest.”

-J. Ki-Zerbo, Introduction, UNESCO GHA Vol. I

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Cluster/Segment III rules

This course is part of the General Education Segment III cluster: African Contributions to World Culture. All Segment III courses must include a minimum of 10 pages of corrected writing. Segment III rules are described in the Class Schedule and Bulletin, and include the requirement that the student must have earned 60 units by the end of the semester in which they take the course.

The Cluster co-ordinator is Dr. Aguibou Yansane. He can be reached at aymouke@sfsu.edu or 338.2495.

Course Description

History of Africa to 1830 forms the first half of a two-semester survey course in African history. The course addresses the major themes of African history prior to the period of intensive European intervention which was a prelude to colonialism. The introductory lessons address the peopling of Africa and the food/technology/trade revolutions between 4500 BC–1000 AD, as well as interaction with the Mediterranean world. The second section addresses state formation in the period 1000-1600 AD. This is followed by a theme-based discussion of political and socio-cultural institutions. The last major section of the class addresses the transformations of Islam, the Atlantic and Indian Ocean trades, and the further development of African state and society 1600–1830 AD.

Learning Objects

Students will be asked to critically and rigorously analyze:

- the way in which African history has been studied, and the sources used to understand the history of the continent.
- the relationship between African peoples and their environment
- the rise of Africa states and state-building techniques prior to 1830
- the relationship between Africans and the Muslim, Middle-Eastern, and European worlds
- how African cultures developed to enable African peoples to deal with the challenges of the environment, their own societies, and relationships with other peoples.
- Africa’s contributions to the world prior to 1830

History of Africa to 1830		
DATE	TOPIC	READINGS/DUE
The Peopling of Africa c.462,000 – c.1000 AD		
Tu 29 Aug	Introduction	
Tu 29 Aug	Environment and human origins	Iliffe, Chapter 1, Falola Chapter 2
Thu 31 Aug	Images of Africa 1: our images & popular images	<i>Prepare your image. Our conceptions of Africa.</i> Falola Chapters 1 and 3
Thu 31 Aug – Tu 5 Sept	Images of Africa 2: from the ‘earliest’ Africans	
Tu 5 Sept	Images of Africa 3: How western academics ‘measure men’ and the implications for Africa	Reader, Shostak
Thu 7 Sept	Map Test	Map Test
Thu 7 Sept	Domestication: harnessing the power of plants and animals	<i>Iliffe Chapter 2</i>
Tu 12 Sept	Pharaonic Egypt	Falola Chapter 4 (pp. 73-109), Iliffe Chapter 3 (18-26). Reader, sources on

		the 'Out of Africa' debate.
Tu 12 Sept- Thu 14 Sept	Carthage and Nubia	Falola Chapter 4 (pp.100-107), Iliffe Chapter 3 (26-33)
Thu 14 Sep	The peopling of Africa I: West Africa	Iliffe Chapter 3 (33-36), Chapter 5 (62-70)
Tu 19 Sept	The peopling of Africa II: The 'Bantu' Expansion	Falola Chapter 5, Iliffe Chapter 6 (97-118)
State and Society in Sub-Saharan Africa 1000 AD – 1600 AD		
Tu 19 Sept – Thus 21 Sept	The implications of trade	Iliffe Chapter 5 (81-85) and Chapter 6 (18-120)
Thu 21 Sept	The development of state and society in West Africa	Falola Chapter 6, Iliffe Chapter 5 (70-80)
Tu 26 Sept	Case study: Sundiata and Mali	Niane all
Tu 26 Sept- Thu 28 Sep	<i>Movie: Keita</i>	
Tu 3 Oct	Keita Discussion	
Tu 3 Oct	<i>Niger River Empire Simulation: Groups meet</i>	Sundiata written assignment due
Thu 5 Oct	<i>Niger River Empire Simulation</i>	
Tu 10 Oct	Abyssinia and north-east Africa	Falola Chapter 10
Tu 10 Oct – Thu 12 Oct	Power and states in East, Central, and Southern Africa	Falola Chapters 8 and 9
Thu 12 Oct	Case study: Great Zimbabwe	
Tu 17 Oct	Midterm Review	Prepare for midterms
Thu 19 Oct	Midterm	Midterm
Topics in immediate pre-modern African culture, production, and belief		
Tu 24 Oct	Family, religion, and belief	Falola Chapter 12, Iliffe Chapter 5 (85-96) and Chapter 6 (120-123)
Tu 24 Oct – Thu 26 Oct	Arts	
Thu 26 Oct	Slavery and production	Reader: Selections from Patrick Manning, <i>Slavery and African Life</i> .
Tu 31 Oct	Gender	
Tu 31 Oct – Thu 2 Nov	Oral tradition and concepts of history	read 'Oral traditions' in reader
Thu 2 Nov	<i>Discussion: Our oral traditions</i>	<i>Oral Tradition assignment – presented orally (of course)</i>
Tu 7 Nov	Christianity	Iliffe Chapter 4 (37-42 and 56-61)
Transformations in African History 1600 AD – 1840 AD		
Thur 9 Nov	North Africa to the Ottomans	Falola Chapter 11, Iliffe Chapter 4 (42-49)
Thur 9 Nov- Tu 14 Nov	West Africa: Islam, trade, and states 17 th and 18 th c.	Falola Chapters 7 and 13 Iliffe Chapter 4 (49-53), Iliffe Chapter 8 (168-173)
Tu 14 Nov – Tu 28 Nov	Atlantic slave trade	Falola Chapter 17, Iliffe Chapter 7
Tu 16 Nov	NO CLASS (research papers or ASA)	ASA Conference November 16th-19th
Tu 28 Nov	Africa in the Indian Ocean	Falola Chapter 14, Iliffe Chapter 4 (53-55)
Thurs 30 Nov	Transformations in economy and slavery: Coastal Africa	Falola Chapter 18, Iliffe Chapter 8 (160-168)
Tu 5 Dec	Kongo, East & Central Africa -17 th and 18 th c.	Falola Chapter 15, Iliffe Chapter 8 (180-186)
Tu 5 Dec – Thurs 7 Dec	Prelude to colonialism?: Southern Africa	Falola Chapter 16, Iliffe Chapter 8 (173-180)
Thurs 7 Dec	Africa at the crossroads	Primary source research paper or professional interaction assignment due
Tu 12 Dec	<i>Discussion: Were the fates of African societies pre-ordained?</i>	<i>Read 'Fate of Societies'. Prepare for discussion</i>
Thu 15 Dec	<i>Final Review</i>	
	Final Exam	Final

Texts

- Course Reader (2005 version only!)
- Niane, D.T., *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*, Longman African Classics, 1995,
- Iliffe, John, *Africans: The History of a Continent*, Cambridge University Press, 1995
- Falola, Toyin (ed), *Africa: African History Before 1885 (Vol I)*, Carolina Academic Press, 2000.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism is a form of cheating or fraud; it occurs when a student misrepresents the work of another as his or her own. Plagiarism may consist of using the ideas, sentences, paragraphs, or the whole text of another without appropriate acknowledgment, but it also includes employing or allowing another person to write or substantially alter work that a student then submits as his or her own. Any assignment found to be plagiarized will be given an "F" grade. All instances of plagiarism in the College of BSS will be reported to the Dean of the College, and may be reported to the University Judicial Affairs Officer for further action.

Attendance

Attendance will be taken in some form or another. If a student misses more than 3 classes (more than 2 in the summer session), the instructor reserves the right to penalize that student.

EVALUATION

Course Marking Guidelines

Map Quiz	Locations	10%
Sundiata Assignment	5-page essay	20%
Research or professional interaction assignment	5-page essay	20%
Midterm	Short Essays and IDs	20%
Final	Short Essays and IDs	30%

Exams

Each exam will consist of short and long essay questions. Students are usually given a choice of essays. Exams cover only the information given in the previous unit of the class. You will be required to know information from both the textbook and lectures. PLEASE NOTE: Lectures are more comprehensive than the text – missing lectures is a bad idea. There will be review sessions.

Sundiata Paper

In approximately 4-6 pages, students are asked to answer one of the following questions:

- 1) What are the places/roles of women in this story and in the Malian society as depicted? In what spheres do women appear to act? In what ways are they excluded or included?
- 2) Consider the theme of 'heritage' as it applies to the character of Sundiata himself. What is Sundiata's heritage? Why is it important to his power, position, personality, etc? What does this tell us about Malian society of this period?
- 3) Explore the idea of the 'griot'. D.T. Niane is one, as is the griot who passes the story on to him. What is their link to the griots of Sundiata's time? Also consider the dual roles of griot as narrator/storyteller and griot as advisor/historian depicted in the book. You have a lot of leeway with this essay, but be sure to concentrate on the book and on historical themes.

Some sources you may use (not required). Be sure to cite properly.

<http://ias.berkeley.edu/orias/sundiata.html>

<http://courses.wcupa.edu/jones/HIS311/sundiata.htm>

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Aegean/3872/sunstory.html>

Ralph A. Austen, ed. *In Search of Sunjata: The Mande Oral Epic As History, Literature, and Performance*. Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1999.

Roland Bertol, *Sundiata, The Epic of the Lion King* (Illustrated by Gregorio Prestopino). NY: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1970.

Research or Professional Interaction Assignment

Alternative 1: Primary source research paper

The research paper for this class is rather special and different from what you are used to. The assignment centers around the notion of evidence. As you know from class, evidence is an especially important issue for Africanists studying the pre-colonial period.

- 1) You will be given a piece of documentary evidence by the instructor. You will not be allowed to choose the piece of evidence you investigate. You are then required to write a 5-page paper with the document as the focus, answering the following questions.
 - a. What is this document? Situate it in the context of time and place.
 - b. Who wrote this document? Attempt to identify the author. Evaluate his/her objectivity, and identify biases, perspective, etc.
 - c. Analyze the document. What is the author trying to tell us?
 - d. Interrogate the document. What does it *really* tell us?
- 2) Bibliography and proposal must be turned in without fail.
- 3) 4-6 pages, Times Roman 12, double spaced, standard gutters and margins equivalent.
- 4) You must utilize at least eight secondary sources. Instructor will guide you. Internet sources will not be accepted. You must demonstrate utilization of two research techniques.
 - a. Research using online databases (J-STOR, Academic Search Elite, etc.)
 - b. Library research
- 5) Paper will be evaluated on the following criteria:
 - a. Critically investigates key secondary sources
 - b. Undertakes a scholarly, unbiased approach
 - c. Produces a strong thesis
 - d. Supports thesis with evidence from multiple scholarly sources
 - e. Proper syntax, sentence structure, citation and footnoting
 - f. Considers and refutes alternate arguments.

Alternative 2: African Studies Association professional interaction assignment

The African Studies Association annual conference will be held this year in San Francisco. This annual convention draws many (2000) of the world's leading professional Africanists, graduate students, etc. Normally, the cost for even attending is prohibitive. However, students who are willing to volunteer for 4 or more hours over the long weekend are allowed to attend for free.

Should you choose to accept this option, you will volunteer for 4 hours and then attend a session (of your choice) at the conference. You will be asked to report on that session.

If you wish to participate in this alternative, you will need to:

- 1) Sign up as a volunteer at <http://groups.google.com/group/ASA06Volunteers>.
- 2) Attend a short meeting (you will be fed) on Sept 28th, at 4pm (campus location to be named), or speak to instructor
- 3) Work for 4 hours at one of the following tasks:
 - a. Pre meeting – assemble packets for conference (Nov 5th, 1-5, World Affairs Council, 312 Sutter St., Suite 200, San Francisco
 - b. At the meeting – staff information and media rooms and registration desk, assist meeting coordinators, monitor video marketplace etc.
 - c. At the meeting – attend at least one full session (with at least 3 papers, see agenda at www.africanstudies.org)
 - d. Write a paper (3-4 pages) on the session, consider the following questions:
 - i. Why did you choose to attend this session?
 - ii. Describe the papers presented in terms of the presenters' principal *research questions* and *thesis*
 - iii. How did the papers relate to each other?.
 - iv. Evaluate the papers in terms of efficacy – were you convinced?
 - v. How did the audience respond to the papers?
 - vi. What struck you as most controversial about the research?
 - vii. What do you think were the presenters' motivations?
 - viii. What did you learn from this session?

