

African History to c. 1800
AS 100.121
Fall 2007

Professor:

Pier M. Larson
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Office Hours: T @ 1-3
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Meeting Times

Lectures: M,T @ 3: Krieger 304
Section 1: T @ 2: Maryland 202
Section 2: T @ 4: Maryland 202
Section 3: T @ 4: Maryland 309
Section 4: T @ 2: Maryland 104

Teaching Assistants:

Alice Wiemers
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Office Hours: T @ 12:45-1:45, Café Q

Scope and Purpose

AS 100.121 is the first in a two-semester survey of African history offered by the Department of History at Johns Hopkins. The course this semester considers the early period of African history up to about the mid-nineteenth century. The course readings and lectures will explore several important themes in the history of Africa and its peoples.

The professor will deliver lectures on Monday and Tuesday; all discussion sections meet on Tuesday either before or after the lecture period. Requirements for superior achievement in the course (an A) include regular attendance at the lectures and discussion sections with no absences unexplained before class, always completing the reading for each week before your assigned discussion section, turning in your informal papers on time each week, regular and vociferous participation in course discussions, and thoughtful and well-written exam papers. *Anyone missing a class (both lecture and discussion section) should notify his or her discussion section leader by telephone or email BEFORE the said class meeting, not afterward.*

How to Use this Syllabus

All the material in this syllabus is important, please read it carefully and refer to it frequently. The most critical part of the syllabus for ongoing purposes is the course

schedule. In it you will find the required reading for each week. This reading and your informal paper should be completed *before* your weekly discussion section on Tuesday.

Requirements

1. Attendance, preparation, asking questions, and participation in class discussions, or, in other words, being responsible and engaged. We expect these from every class participant. Absences—particularly unexplained ones—will adversely affect your grade in the final calculation, especially if you fall in the border area between two grades.

2. Informal weekly reaction/thought papers. These are informal (grammar, spelling, organization not checked) but must be typed, not handwritten. One page, single spaced, is entirely adequate. You are *not* encouraged to write more. The paper should record your informal reaction to the week's assigned reading, a sort of journal of your thoughts. Strive to answer questions such as: What was the argument of the reading? What did you find interesting about them? New? Provocative? Questionable? Each paper should also raise two or more questions or issues for the class to deliberate, and you should raise these verbally during your discussion section. The questions should be thought-provoking ones for your fellow students to consider, not simple informational questions for the instructor to answer. The purpose of the weekly papers is for the instructors to get a sense of how you are thinking critically about the readings and to help you prepare for your oral participation in discussion section. Weekly papers are due each week in discussion section. Ten points will be subtracted from your final grade for each reaction paper not turned in *on time*. You must turn in *your own* reaction paper and it is a violation of academic honesty to have another person turn it in for you or for that person to turn your paper in for you. If you notify your discussion leader of an upcoming absence from class before the class takes place, you may make arrangements to get the informal paper to him or her by some other conveyance.

3. Two map quizzes: one of African geographical features and the other of modern African country names. These will be administered at the beginning of discussion section on September 25 and October 2, respectively.

4. A take-home mid-term examination. This will consist of two 5-page essay answers to two general questions relating to the required readings, professor's lectures, and course discussions through Week 8 (a total of 10 pages). Exam questions will be circulated by email on Tuesday, October 30 and are due in class—at the *beginning* of class—on Monday, November 5. *The conception and writing of these answers must be entirely your own; working with another person on the exam in any way will be interpreted as academic dishonesty and reported.*

5. A take-home final examination. Like the mid-term, this will consist of two 5-page essay answers to two general questions relating to the required readings, professor's lectures, and course discussions from Week 9 to the end of the semester (a total of 10 pages). Exam questions will be distributed as hard copy in class on Monday, December 10 and essays are due at noon on Saturday, December 15, the designated end time for the

final exam. *The conception and writing of these answers must be entirely your own; working with another person on the exam in any way will be interpreted as academic dishonesty and reported.*

Grading

Attendance and Weekly Papers do not add to your grade but detract from it if you fail to attend or to turn in a weekly paper on time. Unexplained absences (i.e. not informing the professor *before* lecture or section leader *before* discussion section) will definitely count against you if your grade is otherwise on the fence between two grades. Ten points will be subtracted from your grade for each weekly paper not turned in on time (i.e. at the end of your discussion section). If you need to make adjustments in the way you write your weekly papers, you will hear from us. If you do not hear from the instructors about your weekly papers, please assume that they are satisfactory. Grades will be calculated on the following point system; individuals near a border line at the end of the semester will be bumped to the higher grade if they have been clear participants in discussions and prompt in their attendance and with their informal papers.

Map Quiz I	100 points
Map Quiz II	100 points
Midterm	400 points
Final	400 points

Required Texts to Purchase

Erik Gilbert and Jonathan T. Reynolds. *Africa in World History: From Prehistory to the Present*. 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2008. [Note, you must have the 2nd edition, dated 2008, not an earlier version.] ISBN: 0136154387.

Joyce Tyldesley, *Daughters of Isis: Women of Ancient Egypt*. New York: Penguin Books, 1994. ISBN: 0140175962.

D. T. Niane, ed. *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*. Revised ed. London: Longman, 2006. ISBN: 1405849428.

Additional Required Text, currently out of print and available on print reserve at MSEL (you are responsible for making a personal photocopy of this book before week 12):

Richard Elphick. *Kraal and Castle: Khoikhoi and the Founding of White South Africa*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977. ISBN: 0300020120.

MSEL Electronic Reserve Password: LAR121

Course Schedule

Week 1: (Sept 10 & 11): The Continent & Human Evolution

- Pier M. Larson, "Myths about Africa, Africans, and African History," manuscript. [MSEL electronic reserve]
- *Africa in World History*: Preface (xvii-xx) and Chapter 1.

Week 2: (Sept 17 & 18) Human Evolution & Agriculture

- *Africa in World History*, Chapters 2 & 3.

Week 3: (Sept 24 & 25) Ancient Egypt

- *Daughters of Isis*, pp. 1-145.

Week 4: (Oct 1 & 2) Ancient Egypt

- *Daughters of Isis*, pp. 146-275.

Week 5: (Oct 8 & 9) The Middle Niger River

- *Africa in World History*, Chapters 4-6.

Week 6: (Oct 16) West African Kingdoms

- *Sundiata*, entire book.

Week 7: (Oct 22 & 23) East Africa, Madagascar, and the Western Indian Ocean

- *Africa in World History*, Chapter 7.
- John Mack, *Madagascar: Island of the Ancestors* (London: British Museum Publications, 1986), pp. 20-53. [MSEL electronic reserve]

Week 8: (Oct 29 & 30) Ethiopia & Great Zimbabwe

- "The Benefits of Isolation: The Ethiopian Highlands," chapter 3 of: Graham Connah, *African Civilizations: An Archaeological Perspective* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 66-107. [MSEL electronic reserve]
- Peter Garlake, *Life at Great Zimbabwe* (Gweru, Zimbabwe: Mambo Press, 1982). [MSEL print reserve; please make your own photocopy of this pamphlet from the copy on reserve.]

Week 9: (Nov. 5 & 6) European Expansion and the Slave Trade

- *Africa in World History*, Chapters 8 & 9.
- Pier M. Larson, "African Diasporas and the Atlantic," in *The Atlantic in Global History, 1500-2000*, edited by Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra and Eric R. Seeman, (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2007), pp. 129-147. [MSEL electronic reserve]

Week 10: (Nov 12 & 13) European Expansion and the Slave Trade

- *Africa in World History*, Chapter 10.
- Pier M. Larson, “Horrid Journeying: Narratives of Enslavement and the Global African Diaspora,” *Journal of World History* (forthcoming, 2008). [MSEL electronic reserve]
- Narratives of Enslavement: Olaudah Equiano, Joseph Wright, and Mohammed Ali ben Said [manuscripts on MSEL electronic reserve]

Week 11: (Nov 19 & 20) East Africa and the Lives of Slaves

- *Africa in World History*, Chapter 11
- Narratives of Enslavement: Chisi-Ndjurisiye-Sichayunga, Petro Chilekwa, and Aaron Kuku [manuscripts on MSEL electronic reserve]

Week 12: (Nov 26 & 27) South Africa

- *Africa in World History*, Chapter 12
- *Kraal and Castle*, pp. 1-116 [make a photocopy from MSEL print reserve]

Week 13: (Dec 3 & 4) South Africa

- *Kraal and Castle*, pp. 117-239 [make a photocopy from MSEL print reserve]

Week 14: Monday, December 10 is the last day of classes.

- There will be a lecture; the final exam will be available in hard copy for you to pick up at the end of class. Make sure you attend the class!