**History 49A: Survey of African History to c.1800**

**Lectures:** CHEM 1171 Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:30-10:45am

**Professor Mhoze Chikowero**

**Office Hours: Wed. 9:30-11am**

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TAs: Ross Melczer HSSB 3216 Holly Roose HSSB 3219

Office Hrs: Thur. 11-1pm, HSSB 3216 Office Hrs:

Sections: Mondays Sections: Fridays

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**Course Description:**

This course is an introductory survey of African history from the earliest times to the 1800s AD. It combines the chronological and thematic approaches to explore how Africans manipulated their diverse environments and interacted with each other and strangers to shape their own history. Among other key themes, it explores some of the continent’s early civilizations; the domestication of crops and animals; early population movements; technological inventions and innovations; spiritualties and philosophies; the emergence and disintegration of states; local and long distance trade systems including across the Sahara Desert and the Indian and Ethiopian Oceans. We will wrap up by analyzing the emergence and impact of African enslavement and trading on both Africa and the enslaving nations of Europe, America and the Arab world. Beyond the socio-economic and political effects of the inhumane trade, we will also explore its intellectual burden, particularly its diseasing of Western consciousness that constructed Africa through a powerful colonizing discourse into a “Dark Continent.” The course revolves around lectures, weekly section discussions and written assignments, **including impromptu quizzes**. Students are expected to attend **ALL** lectures and sections. You cannot skip lectures and section and hope to fully grasp the interconnected themes and do well in the course. You are expected to do **all the readings before class** in order to participate in discussions from an informed point of view. Neither mere attendance nor uninformed participation will earn you marks.

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**Readings:** Purchase the course reader at **SB Printers**, in UCen. **Always** bring it to class and section. The **asterisks \*\*** denote readings that you will cover specifically for section.

In addition to the reader, the following books (placed on **reserve**) are recommended for **further reading**:

* Cheikh Anta Diop, *African Origins of Civilization: Myth or Reality*? **Please buy a copy if you can.**
* Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. **Available on-line.**
* Malidoma Some, *Of Water and the Spirit* (A Biography).

**Grading Rubric:** The course consists of four examinable components as follows:

* Section Participation 25%
* Weekly assignments/impromptu quizzes 20%
* Research Paper 25%
* Final Exam 30%

**Research Paper:** 8 pages (minimum 7 ¾ pages and maximum 8 ¼ pages); double spaced; 12 point font; Times New Roman; 1” margins; single spaced headings; consistent citations.

***Due: November 10 in class***

**Basic Rules of Engagement**

* Full and punctual attendance is expected. **More than two non-emergency absences** will have you dropped from the course.
* Do all your readings BEFOREHAND, and make informed contributions in class.
* There will be no second chances on missed or failed assignments.
* Please utilize **consultation** time, and ask questions in class and section. However, consultation *will not* substitute for studying, lectures, or sections.
* Civility: Respect others’ opinions (and “accents”- our mouths are all shaped differently!). Attitude is everything.
* When you email me, address me by my name (no “hey!”), and indicate in the **subject line** the purpose of your email.

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**THEMES AND READINGS**

**Geography, Historiography, and Sources**

*Thurs. Sept. 22:*

* Adebayo Oyebade, “The Study of Africa in Historical Perspective,” *Africa Volume 1: African History Before 1885*, Toyin Falola (ed.), North Carolina Academic Press, Durham, 2000.
* \*\*Chris Lowe *et al*, “Talking about ‘Tribe’: Moving from Stereotypes to Analysis,” [www.Africaaction.org](http://www.Africaaction.org), February 2008.

**Ancient Africa: Egypt in Perspective**

*Tues. Sept. 27:*

* Chiekh Anta Diop, “Origins of Ancient Egyptians,” *UNESCO General History of Africa II: Ancient Civilizations of Africa*, pp. 27-51.
* Raymond Mauny, “A Review of Diop,” *Problems in African History: Precolonial Centuries,* Markus Wiener Publishing, NY, 1994.

**Q:** What is the significance of Diop’s Egypt thesis to African history? Read Diop’s book, *The African Origin of Civilization* (on reserve) and find at least four other readings that substantiate or refute Diop’s thesis. State your well-argued and supported position in a double-spaced 8-page paper.

**Due: Tuesday Nov. 10th**

**Technology, Food Production, and State Formation 8000 BC- 10 CE**

*Thurs. Sept. 29th*

* J.D. Clark, “The Spread of Food Production in Sub-Sharan Africa,” *Journal of African History* 3, 2, 1962, pp. 211-228.
* Christopher Ehret, “On the Antiquity of Agriculture in Ethiopia,” *JAH* 20, 2, 1979, pp. 161-177.

**Early Intra-Continental Mobilities**

*Tues. Oct. 4th*

* S. Lwanga-Lunyiigo and J. Vansina, “The Bantu-Speaking People and their Expansion,” *UNESCO General History of Africa III: Africa from the Seventh to the Eleventh Century*, pp. 140-162.

**State Formation, Early Urban Cultures: Jenne-Jeno (Guest Lecture)**

*Thurs. Oct. 6th*

* Susan Keech and Roderick J. McIntosh, “The Inland Niger Delta before the Empire of Mali: Evidence from Jenne-Jeno,” *JAH* 22, 1, 1881.
* \*\*Susan Keech and Roderick J. McIntosh, “Finding Jenne-Jeno, West Africa’s Oldest City,” *National Geographic*, Vol. 162, 3, Sept. 1982.

**Discussion Question:** What does archaeology teach us about Jenne-Jeno?

**The Sudanic Empires of West Africa: Ghana, Mali, Songhai**

*Tues. Oct. 11th*

* J.I. Dibua, “Sudanese Kingdoms of West Africa,” *Africa*, chapter 6.
* \*\*Leo Africanus, “The Western Sudan in the Sixteenth Century,” *Western African History*: Vol. 1 of *African History: Texts and Readings*, Markus Wiener Publishing, Robert Collins (ed.), NY, 1990, pp. 27-31.

**Southern-Central African State Systems: Mapungubwe, Great Zimbabwe, etc.**

*Thurs. Oct. 13th*

* Graham Connah, “A Question of Economic Basis: Great Zimbabwe and Related Sites,” *African Civilizations: Precolonial Cities in Tropical Africa: an archaeological perspective*, 1987, pp. 183-213.

*Tues. Oct. 18th*

**Film:** Kilwa, Mapungubwe, and Great Zimbabwe (to watch in class)

**Trade and State Formation: A Debate**

*Oct. 20th*

* S.I. Mudenge, “The Role of Foreign Trade in the Rozvi Empire: A Reappraisal,” *Journal of African History* 15, 3, 1974.
* \*\*Emmanuel Terray, “Long Distance Exchange and the Formation of the State: The Case of the Abron Kingdom of Gyaman,” *Economy and Society* 3, 3, 1974.
* D. Chanaiwa, “Politics and Long-Distance Trade in the Mwenemutapa Empire during the Sixteenth Century,” *International journal of African Historical Studies* 5, 3, 1972 (**not in reader but available online**).

**African Writing Systems and the Question of Literacy**

*Tues. Oct. 25th*

* Clinton Crawford, “Written Language in Ancient Egypt,” *Recasting Ancient Egypt in the African Context*, pp. 101-150.
* Saki Mafundikwa (materials to be provided in class).

**Timbuktu: An African City of Learning**

*Thurs. Oct. 27th*

* The Libraries of Timbuktu (materials to be provided in class).
* \*\*Marq de Villiers and Sheila Hirtle, “Life and Learning in the City of Gold,” *Timbuktu: The Sahara’s Fabled City of Gold*, pp. 150-172.

**African Spiritualities, Religions, and Philosophies**

*Tues. Nov. 1*

* \*\*Malidoma Some, “Slowly Becoming,” *Of Water and the Spirit*, pp. 14-55.
* Religion at the Family Level (materials to be provided in class).

**Africa’s Development Prior to its Incorporation into the World Capitalist Economic System**

*Thurs. Nov. 3rd*

* Walter Rodney, “How Africa Developed before the coming of the Europeans- Up to the Fifteenth Century,” *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, pp.33-71.

**The Slave Trade: Emergence (Guest Lecture)**

*Tues. Nov. 8th*

* Linda Heyman, “Slavery and its Transformation in the Kingdom of Kongo, 1491-1800,” *JAH* 50, 2009.
* \*\*The Voyage of the Hannibal, Carrying Slaves from West Africa to Barbados,” W.H. Worger, Nancy L. Clark and Edward Alpers, *Africa and the West: A Documentary History from the Slave Trade to Independence*, pp. 29-34.
* \*\* “Olaudah Equiano Becomes a Slave,” *Africa and the West*, pp. 42-50.

**Did Enslavement Pre-Date the Trans-Ethiopian Sea Slave Trade? A Debate.**

*Thurs. Nov. 10th*

* Walter Rodney, “African Slavery and Other Forms of Social Oppression on the Upper Guinea Coast in the Context of the Atlantic Slave Trade,” *Journal of African History*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1966, pp. 431-443.
* J.D. Fage, “Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Context of West African History,” *Journal of African History*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 1969, pp. 393-404.

**Impact of Enslavement on Africa: Underdevelopment**

*Tues. Nov. 15th*

* Walter Rodney, “The Slave Trade as a Basic Factor in African Underdevelopment,” *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, pp. 95-149.
* \*\* “The Greatest Evil Ever,” *New African*, Oct. 2011.
* \*\* “We Are Guilty,” *New African*, Oct. 2011.

**Abolition and Emergence of “Legitimate” Trade**

*Thurs. Nov. 17th*

* Robin Law, “The Transition from the Slave Trade to ‘Legitimate’ Commerce,” *From Chains to Bonds*.

**Africa at the Close of the 19th Century: Political Reconfigurations…**

*Tues. Nov.22nd*

* J.D. Omer-Cooper, “Shaka and the Rise of the Zulu,” in Klein and Johnson (eds.), *Perspectives on the African Past*, pp. 126-137.

**Thursday November 24th: NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**

**The Mfecane Debate**

*Tues. Nov. 29th*

* Film on the Zulu Kingdom (in class)
* Patrick Brantlinger, “Victorians and Africans: The Genealogy of the Myth of the Dark Continent,” *Critical Inquiry*, 12, autumn 1985.

**…And Re-scripting Africa: A Colonizing Discourse**

*Thurs. Dec. 1st*

* \*\*Joseph Conrad, “Outpost of Progress,” *Joseph Conrad’s Heart of Darkness: A Casebook*, Gene M. Moore (ed.), pp 17-43.
* Chinua Achebe, “An Image of Africa,” *Research in African Literatures* 9, 1, 1978.

**TAKE HOME EXAM, DUE Dec. 8th by 1pm.**