

History 304: Africa in World History

Professor Clarke

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Office Hours: MWF 3-4, TR 10:30-11:45 and by appt. in MacLean 374C

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Africa has always been a fundamental part of the global economic, political, and social system. We will attempt to understand Africa's current predicament through an analysis of the past, looking at how the peoples and states of Africa interacted with Europeans, Asians, and Americans, both north and south. Topics of study include the African and Atlantic slave trades, the spread of colonialism and the Scramble for Africa (1884), decolonization and revolution, and Apartheid. The class will begin with a critical examination of the image of Africa in the west.

This class fulfills the requirements for Dragon Core 8:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of our universal human concerns.
2. Explain globalization and how it links and affects the local, regional, and international levels of society as well as the mechanisms and norms of global cooperation.
3. Discuss global perspectives and world-views by giving attention to the perceptions of peoples of various regions of the world as well as difference stemming from cultures, arts, ideologies, and institutions.
4. Explain the interrelations among environment, technology, and/or social organization in various regions of the world.

Class Promises

This course makes a set of promises to you (assuming you fulfill the expectations below). By the end of the semester, you should be able:

1. To be familiar with the role of Africa and Africans in the global system. How has Africa influenced and been influenced by the spread of religion, the emergence of a global economic system, the rise and fall of the slave trade, and the struggle to end Apartheid.
2. To develop skills as a historian by analyzing primary documents, interrogating bias, and tracing change over time.
3. To write effective papers, with arguments and evidence.

Course Expectations

This course will fulfill these promises if you promise the following in return:

- **To attend class.** This course is a mixture of lecture and discussion, to do well in this class you have to be present. I do not take attendance, but your attendance and attention is expected.
- **To participate a lot.** Participating will help you write excellent papers, craft persuasive responses on exams, and come away from the course not only more knowledgeable about environmental history, but also more skilled in the methods and practices necessary for the study of history and other academic disciplines. Class participation consists of oral and written contributions, as well as group work. You should use the resources online (like the social forum on Moodle) as much as possible (everyday!).
- **To read the assigned materials carefully.** As we will discuss the readings in every class session, completing the day's reading before entering class will help you succeed. Be sure to take notes on what you read! Jot down the points you thought were important, the questions you have, and prepare yourself for discussion before class. A large part of your grade comes from participation, so be sure to be ready to participate.
- **To complete all assignments.** To pass the class you must complete all the assignments.

Assignments

Papers: There are two ways to complete the writing component of the course. You must choose one of the following two options.

Option 1: a ten-page essay on any aspect of Africa in world history. This paper will be a research essay, developed in close consultation with the course instructor.

Option 2: two five-page essays on two of the following three topics:

- *The Gods Must Be Crazy* and the Bushman Myth. Write an analysis (not a summary) of the images presented in the movie and the historical construction of these images.
- Tradition and modernity in *Things Fall Apart*. Write an analysis of the novel, focusing on the changes that occur in Umuofia and the reasons for those changes.
- Primary and Secondary Source analysis: Select two primary or secondary documents (but not one of each) from Northrup, *The Atlantic Slave Trade* or another source (see instructor for guidance) and compare the authors' biases and intentions. History and social studies majors must choose this option.

I encourage you to use the Write Cite and to turn in drafts of your papers to me (give me at least three days to read them).

The only due date for the class is May 13th (four days before grades are due). All papers must be turned in by May 13th at 4:00pm. Late papers will be accepted and incompletes will be granted only under the most extreme circumstances.

Reacting to the Past: After Spring Break, we will be focusing on South African history and playing an extended role-playing game. We adopt South African alter egos and travel back in time to help the nation transition from a repressive, racist regime to a democracy. The game is intensively participative and will require you to make written and oral contributions. The written contributions will total 5 pages.

Discussion: The major assignment is to participate in class discussions, both online and in class. Discussion provides an opportunity for the class – students and professor - to understand the readings and lectures better, to ask questions, to challenge assumptions and assertions, and to get a grasp on the course materials. Nobody – not even the professor – knows everything about the subject, but everybody knows something, has an interpretation, and can contribute to class learning.

The point of discussion is to have you ask questions about the course materials, to scrutinize the point of view of the author, and to elucidate the connections between the parts of the course. Asking questions is an essential feature of the discussion: often you have the same question as many of your classmates, so do not hesitate to ask a question!

You will receive a participation grade out of 3 for every class.

- 3 points: read and thought about assigned readings, contributed thoughtfully to class discussion, and ties readings and discussion to course themes.
- 2 points: read most of the assigned readings, contributed competently to discussions.
- 1 point: was present in class but did not participate in discussion.
- 0 points: absent.
- 3 points: not present or hostile, disruptive, and/or threatening in discussion or during lecture. This includes using cell phones (texting), sleeping, reading materials not directly related to lecture (including that day's reading), or violating class rules.

Class-long discussions about films and novels will count triple.

Discussion constitutes a major portion of your course grade; it is nearly impossible to achieve a decent grade (A or B) without participating effusively and intelligently in discussion – your presence does not suffice.

Exams: There will be a midterm and a final exam covering the major issues of the class. The exams will be open-note (you may bring your own hand-written notes to the exam. You may not use photocopies, electronic notes, or printouts). Both exams will be comprehensive.

Quizzes: There will be random quizzes throughout the semester, in class (pop quizzes) and online.

NB: All written work should follow Chicago Style for the Humanities (aka Turabian) and be written for an academic audience. Ask me for guidance on these points if necessary. See the style guide I link to on my website for more information. See my webpage for a quick guide.

Extra Credit

You may earn up to 16 extra credit points.

First, you can attend Africa-related talks and events on campus and in the community, reading African-themed books and literature, and by watching films and documentaries. To achieve extra credit, you will write a 300-word report analyzing how the event/film relates to African history and our class. You will also present your report to the class (be sure to look for your classmates at the event to make the presentation in a group). Consult with me before the event to make sure it meets our class's parameters. These reports are worth up to 4 points each and you can do two a semester.

The second way to earn 8 extra credit points is to present your case study at the Student Academic Conference on April 20.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is expected from you at all times. According to the student handbook:

“The University expects all students to represent themselves in an honest fashion. In academic work, students are expected to present original ideas and give credit for the ideas of others. The value of a college degree depends on the integrity of the work completed by the student.

“When an instructor has convincing evidence of cheating or plagiarism, a failing grade may be assigned for the course in which the student cheated. Instructors also may choose to report the offense, the evidence, and their action to the Dean of their college or the Vice President for Academic Affairs. If the instructor (or any other person) feels the seriousness of the offense warrants additional action, the incident may be reported to the Judicial Affairs Officer. The Judicial Affairs Officer will follow procedures set out in the Student Conduct Code. After the review of the case and a fair, unbiased hearing, the Judicial Affairs Officer may take disciplinary action if the student is found responsible ...

“A student who has a course grade reduced by an instructor because of cheating or plagiarism, and who disputes the instructor's finding, may appeal the grade, but only by using the Grade Appeal Policy, which states that the student must prove the grade was arbitrary, prejudicial, or in error.”

From the MSUM Student Handbook,

<http://www.mnstate.edu/sthandbook/policiesprocedures/academichonesty.cfm>

Needs and Requirements

If you have special needs for classroom access, completion of assignments, or testing, please notify the course instructor. I will do everything possible to help all students complete the course successfully.

Students with disabilities who believe they may need an accommodation in this class are encouraged to contact Greg Toutges, Coordinator of Disability Services at 477-2131 (Voice) or 1-800-627-3529 (MRS/TTY), CMU 114 as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Tips for Success

The following points are crucial to get a good start in this course and finish well:

- Complete each week's reading assignment before class. Take notes. Contribute energetically and intelligently to discussions. Think of two points you'd like to make in class. Make those points.
- Use a dictionary and keep a notebook with the meanings of words you look up.
- Check moodle regularly; keep up with announcements and assignments.
- Go to office hours to raise questions and consult about course requirements. I am usually in my office on MWF afternoons and sometimes in the morning. I can also hold specific appointments in my office or the CMU at other times.
- Get to know your fellow students. Partner up with someone to keep each other current on course-related announcements, handouts, etc.
- Remember, good historians constantly question their sources. You should do the same.

Grade Breakdown

Writing	42 points
Midterm	17 points
Reacting Game	45 points
Final Exam	34 points
Class Participation	45 points
Quizzes and other	17 points
Extra Credit	up to 16 points

Grade Distribution

A=100-93, A-=92-90,
B+=89-87, B=86-83, B-=82-80
C+=79-77, C=76-73, C-=72-70
D=69-60
F= <59

Class Rules

- Be respectful of the class and your classmates by paying attention to lecture and discussion.
- No eating, drinking, cell phones, computers, or sleeping in class.
- Sit in a different seat next to a different person each class.

Readings

Available for purchase at the MSUM Bookstore:

David Northrup, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*, 2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002.

Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, New York: Anchor Books, 1994.

Nancy Clark and William Worger, *South Africa: The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*. New York: Pearson Longman, 2004.

Recommended Textbook:

Robert O. Collins and James M. Burns, *A History of Sub-Saharan Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Other readings are available on e-reserve through the library.

Class Schedule

January 11: Introduction

January 13: Construction of the African

- Curtis Keim, *Mistaking Africa* (selections) [ER]

January 18: The Bushmen Myth

- Watch video: *Wildmen of the Kalahari*

January 20: Film: *The Gods Must Be Crazy*

January 25: Film: *The Gods Must Be Crazy*

January 27: Exploration of African Coast

- Chapter I in Northrup, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*
Suggested due date for *Gods Must Be Crazy* paper

February 1: African slave trades

- Chapter II in Northrup, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*

February 3: Atlantic slave trade

- Chapter III in Northrup, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*

February 8: Effects of slavery on Africa

- Chapters IV and V in Northrup, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*

February 10: Scramble for Africa

- Galbraith, "Gordon, Mackinnon, and Leopold" (ER)
Suggested due date for document-comparison paper

February 15: Collaboration or Resistance

- Prein, "Guns and Top Hats" (ER)

February 17: Colonial Rule in Africa

- Nwabughuogu, “The Role of Propaganda in the Development...” (ER)

February 22: Discussion of Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*

February 24: Nationalism

- Allman, “Youngmen and the Porcupine” (ER)
Suggested Due Date for *Things Fall Apart* Paper

March 1: Africa in World War I and II

- Echenberg, “Morts pour le France” (ER)

March 3: Break up of European colonialism

- Flint, “Planned Decolonization and Its Failure...” (ER)

March 8: Politics and economics after independence

- “Did Colonialism distort Contemporary African Development” (ER)

March 10: Midterm exam

March 22: South African History, pt. 1

- Clark and Worger, *South Africa*, 3-31

March 24: South African History, pt. 2

- Clark and Worger, *South Africa*, 35-61, 123-137

March 29: South African Cinema day

- *Mapantsula* and *Cry Freedom!*
- Read Game Packet to p. 118

March 31: South African History, pt. 3

- Clark and Worger, *South Africa*, 62-101

April 5: Introduction to the Game and Faction Sessions

April 7: Session 1

April 12: Session 2

April 14: Session 3

April 19: Session 4

April 20: Student Academic Conference

April 21: Session 5

April 26: Session 6

April 28: Session 7

May 3: Discussion about the game