AFH 2000 (section 001E):  
Africa in World History  
Spring 2015

Meeting  

LIT 0125  
T: periods 8-9, R: period 9

Instructor  

Associate Professor Susan M. O’Brien  
office: 437 Grinter; phone: 392-2017  
office hours: Wednesday 2-5, Friday 2-3, & by appt.  
smobrien@ufl.edu

Course Description

‘Africa is not an historical continent; it shows neither change nor development. Whatever may have happened there belongs to the world of Asia and Europe.’ – G.F.W. Hegel, German philosopher, 1834

‘At present there is no African history: there is only the history of Europeans in Africa, the rest is darkness…and darkness is not a subject of history.’ – Hugh Trevor Roper, British historian, 1961

As the above quotes by prominent European scholars suggest, the history of Africa has, until the very recent past, been dismissed as outside of or irrelevant to world history. In this course we challenge this assumption by examining the myriad ways in which Africa has been central to globally transformative developments and relationships, from the early spread of Christianity and Islam, to the trans-Saharan and Atlantic slave trades and European colonialism. We will explore local African histories in a global context, and the connections that link different African regions to other parts of the globe through trade, migration, and colonial conquest. We will also focus on key zones of interaction (Atlantic, trans-Saharan), such as the Indian Ocean world, that has linked the Swahili coast of East Africa to Arab and Asian worlds through intensive trade, and cultural and religious exchange for millennia.

Requirements

Your grade in this class will be based on the following:

1) attendance and participation (20%). Attendance and participation in class discussions are considered mandatory, and it will be difficult to do well on the exam and papers if you do not regularly attend class lectures. Attendance will be taken at each class.

If you miss class for any reason, it is your responsibility to find out from your classmates what you have missed. Do *NOT* ask the professor for a synopsis of the class periods that you have missed or for materials handed out in previous classes!
2) first response paper (10%): due in class Tuesday, January 20th, (3 double-spaced pages): this paper will react to and analyze the previous weeks' readings. Further instructions on composing a successful response paper will be posted to the E-Learning course web-site.

3) in-class mid-term exam (25%): Thursday, February 26  This exam will consist of paired identifications, short answers, and/or an essay question based on material covered in readings and lectures. A review sheet for the exam will be posted to the E-learning course website a week before the exam. **No make-up exams will be given for late or absent students.** Excused absences require prompt documentation by a doctor or university administrator.

4) second response paper (15%): due in class Thursday, March 26 (3 double-spaced pages): this paper will react to and analyze the previous weeks’ readings. Further instructions on composing a successful response paper will be posted to the E-Learning course web-site.

5) take-home final essay exam due Monday, April 27th at noon (30%): On this exam you will be asked to choose one out of two essay options, and compose a 5-6 page essay response. The questions will be based on material covered in readings and lectures. The essay questions will be posted by April 21st to the E-Learning course website. There are no opportunities for extra credit in this class.

Readings

The following books are required and should be available from online vendors:


Additional readings in the form of selected book chapters, academic and news articles will be posted on our course page on the Sakai web-site: http://lss.at.ufl.edu

Overall letter grades for the course will be assigned according to the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Equivalent</th>
<th>GPA Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Above 92</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Classroom Policies and Ethics

Students are expected to arrive to class on time, be attentive and remain until class is over. Being consistently late is a disruption to the class and is not acceptable. Students who disrupt class will be asked to leave. Cell phones and laptops must be turned off at the beginning of the class.

All students should observe the University of Florida's standards of academic honesty. In the event that a student is found cheating or plagiarizing, s/he will automatically fail the course and will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs. Acts of plagiarism include:

- Turning in a paper that was written by someone else (i.e., papers written by another student, a research service, or downloaded off the Internet).
- Copying, verbatim, a paragraph or significant portion of text from the work of another author without properly acknowledging the source through a commonly accepted citation style and using quotation marks.
- Paraphrasing (i.e., restating in your own words) text written by another author without citing that author.
- Using a unique idea or concept, which you discovered in a specific reading, without citing that author.

Students with disabilities requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Anyone with a disability should feel free to see the professor during office hours to make the necessary arrangements.

Course Schedule (subject to change)

Week 1

T 1/6 Intro to class & instructor

R 1/8 What is ‘world history’? How does African history fit within world history? How and why has the relationship between world history and African history been contentious?


**Week 2: Beginnings**

T 1/13  Africa in western thought, media, & activism

R 1/15  African Geography & Environment  Gilbert & Reynolds, chap. 1
Human Origins  Gilbert & Reynolds, chap. 2

**Week 3: Food Production and Early Technology**

T 1/20  Hunter Gatherers  Gilbert & Reynolds, chap. 3

**FIRST RESPONSE PAPER DUE IN CLASS**

R 1/22  The Origins of Agriculture  Gilbert & Reynolds, chap. 4

**Week 4: Africa and the Mediterranean World**

T 1/27  Ancient Egypt  Gilbert & Reynolds, chap. 5: 67-78.

R 1/29  Nubia & Aksum  Gilbert & Reynolds, chap. 5: 78-84

**Week 5: Africa & the Development of Christianity**

T 2/3  Desert Fathers/ Ethiopian Christianity  Gilbert & Reynolds, chap. 6
* *Kebre Neghast* excerpt.


**Week 6: Trans-Saharan Africa in World History/ Islam as a Globalizing Force**

T 2/10  From Desert Barrier to Global Highway/ Islamization of North & West Africa
Week 7: Africa and the Indian Ocean World: the Swahili Coast

T 2/17 Swahili Origins & Urban Transformation/ Portugese Incursions & the Omani Empire
Gilbert & Reynolds, chaps. 8 & 12

R 2/19 the Zanzibari Revolution (reading TBA)

Week 8: Southern African State Building

T 2/24 Shaka Zulu, the Afrikaner ‘Great Trek,’ & British Colonialism in South Africa
Gilbert & Reynolds, chap. 13

R 2/26 MID-TERM EXAM IN CLASS

** SPRING BREAK: FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 7 **

Week 9: Africa & the Making of the Atlantic World

T 3/10 The Rise of the Atlantic Slave Trade
Gilbert & Reynolds, chaps. 9 & 10

R 3/12 Atlantic Creole Cultures

Week 10: European Colonialism in Africa

T 3/17 the Industrial Revolution & the Scramble for Africa
Gilbert & Reynolds, chaps. 14 & 15

R 3/19 Colonial Economies & Administration/ Africa & the World Wars
Gilbert & Reynolds, chap. 16

Week 11: Social & Cultural Change in the Colonial Era
T 3/24  Gilbert & Reynolds, chap.17  

R 3/26  (Global) Popular Culture in Colonial & Post-Colonial Africa  
* Charles Ambler, ‘Popular Films & Colonial Audiences in Northern Rhodesia.’  

**SECOND REPSONSE PAPER DUE IN CLASS **

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**Week 12: African Nationalism and Decolonization**

T 3/31  Gilbert & Reynolds, chap. 18  


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**Week 13: Contemporary Africa: Textbooks & Tribunals in the Aftermath of Crises**

T 4/7  Apartheid & Its Aftermath  
Gilbert & Reynolds, chap. 19  


R 4/9  genocide & justice in Rwanda  

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**Week 14: Africa and the Global Spread of Christian Evangelicalism**


** FILM IN CLASS: ‘God Loves Uganda’ (2013) **

R 4/16  Muslim/Christian Conflict in Contemporary Africa
Week 15: Africa & Global Epidemics in the 20th c.: from Influenza to Ebola

T 4/21 (Reading TBA)

** Monday, April 27th at NOON: TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM DUE IN MY OFFICE: 437 GRINTER (early submissions welcome)**

Disclaimer: This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance class learning. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.