

KALAMAZOO COLLEGE, Spring 2004
HISTORY 290:Civilizations of Africa
Instructor: Dr. Fiona Vernal, History/African Studies
Class Times: MWF 2:40 to 3:55 p.m. Dewing 206

Office: Dewing 303F
Phone: 269-337-5789

Office Hours: Tuesdays 10-12 or by appointment
Email: vernal@kzoo.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a broad historical survey of civilizations in Africa. Rather than cover the entire scope of African history, which is impossible in ten weeks, the course uses case studies from different areas of the continent to elucidate key themes in the early history of Africa. Some of the major themes we will explore in lecture and discussion include:

- The science and politics of the origins of human life in Africa
- African subsistence systems (hunting and gathering, pastoralism, agriculture)
- The socio-economic and political structure of African indigenous societies
- African state formation
- Slavery and the Slave Trade
- Nineteenth Century revolutions in commerce and politics
- World Religion (Christianity and Islam) in Africa

Lectures are delivered on Mondays and Wednesdays. Fridays are devoted exclusively to discussion of the assigned readings and individual case studies. The lectures and readings comprise two distinct segments of the course. While the readings complement the broad themes of the lectures, they also have their own organizing themes, which are discussed specifically in the Friday sessions. The course employs the concept of “frontier” as a concept that helps to deal with the breadth and scope and breadth of our topic

Prerequisites: None required

Cultures Credit: Yes

READINGS

The following books are available from the bookstore in HICKS

Author	Title
Kevin Shillington	<i>History of Africa (HOA)(Textbook)</i>
D. T. Niane	<i>Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali</i>
Joyce Tyldesley	<i>Daughters of Isis</i>
Maryse Conde	<i>Segu</i>
John Thornton	<i>The Congolese Saint Anthony: Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita</i>

CLASS POLICIES:

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory and is included in your participation grade. Medical and Athletic absences will be excused with the appropriate paperwork from the Health services or coach. Lectures are on Mondays and Wednesdays. Fridays are devoted to the discussion of the assigned readings. If you missed a lecture, be sure to get notes

from your classmates. If you miss a discussion on Friday for medical, athletic or any other reason, *a 2-page report on that week's reading is due within one calendar week.* You can bring the paper to class or to my office, Dewing 303F.

Academic Integrity: There is a zero-tolerance policy for cheating and plagiarism on this campus and in this class. Suspected cases will be turned over to the Student Development Office for review and your work will be submitted for inspection by *Turnitin.com*. Confirmation of cheating or plagiarism will result in a **failing grade** for this class.

Assistance: If you are in doubt about correct citation styles, especially about internet sources, please consult the *Chicago Manual of Style* or Kate Turabian,'s *Manual* at the library or the wonderful handbook used by first-year seminars, Kirszner and Mandell's *The Brief Handbook*. I highly recommend in your academic career here at Kalamazoo College that you invest in this handbook. It has a cornucopia of information about everything from research methods and time management, to grammar and citation styles. Ignorance is no excuse for incorrect citations. If you need help you can see me during office hours, or by appointment; and remember to take advantage of the Academic Resource Center.

GRADING

20% Mid-Term Consists of a choice of five identifications, a short

20% Participation The strength and quality of this course depends partly on your engagement with the assigned readings and on participation in weekly discussions. While there will be time for discussion during lecture, Fridays are reserved for discussing the assigned readings. As a part of your weekly assignment you are required to write (due in class every Friday)

- (a) a paragraph summarizing the main arguments of the book
- (b) a paragraph on what arguments new/provocative/interesting/debatable/interesting
- (c) a paragraph on what the source materials are and what their strengths and limits are
- (d) 2-3 discussion questions that you find interesting

10% *Students are responsible for leading One (1) discussion section which is included in your overall participation grade. Our current enrollment means that each week 2-3 students will be responsible for the discussion. This entails a 5 minute overview of the main readings *along with* some statement on the *sort of source material we are reading.*

30% Final Exam Identifications and Essays

10% Paper

10% Map quizzes

Movies: TBA

**Part I
Week One**

Lectures: *Introductions (“Mapping Africa Exercise”)*

Readings: Kevin Shillington, *History of Africa, Chapter 1, “The Early Prehistory of Africa, Pages 1-16*

Lorna Marshall, “The !Kung Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert”

Colin Turnbull, “The Mbuti Pygmies of the Congo,”

Elphick, R. Chapters 1 and 3,” The Early History of the Khoikhoi,” and “Power and Wealth in Traditional Cape Khoikhoi Society,”

Discussion: “Mapping Exercise”/Myth of Africa

Week Two.

Lectures: Egyptian Frontiers (Ancient Egypt)

Readings: Joyce Tyldesley, *Daughters of Isis, pages 1-145*

Shillington, HOA, Page 16-29 (read this first)

Week Three.

Lectures: Ethiopian Frontiers (Axum, Meroe and Ethiopia)

Readings. Joyce Tyldesley, *Daughters of Isis, pages 146-275 and “Handout on Ethiopia”*

Week Four.

Lectures: Eastern and Southern African Frontiers (Commerce and State Formation in Eastern and Southern Africa)

Readings. Packet will be distributed in class

Week Five.

Lectures: The Heart of Africa (Politics and Religion in the Congo)

Reading: John Thornton, *The Kongoese St. Anthony: Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita and the Antonian Movement, 1684-1706*

Mid-Terms

PART II

Week Six.

Lectures: Northern African Frontiers (The trans-Saharan commercial system)

Reading: Packet will be distributed in class

Week Seven.

Lectures: West Africa I (State Formation, Trade and Religion)

Reading, Niane, Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali

Week Eight

Lectures: West Africa II (State Formation, continued)

Reading: Packet will be distributed in class

Week Nine.

Lectures: Slavery and the Slave Trade

Reading: Maryse Conde, Segu

Week Ten.

Lectures: Nineteenth Century Revolutions in Africa

Reading: Packet will be distributed in class