

AS 100.123
Introduction to African History: Diversity, Mobility, Innovation
Fall 2019

Professor

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Class Meeting Time & Place

M & W @ noon-1:15pm, Gilman Hall 17

Scope, Themes and Purpose

This course is a one-semester introduction to African history between the second millennium CE and the present (1000 CE – 2019 CE). Its key aim is to provide students with important introductory knowledge about a massive and complex place: the African continent, including the people who lived and worked there. The course explores a sequence of important subjects in this era, including Africa's many international connections, long-distance trade, and state formation prior to the twentieth century; forms of European colonization and colonial economies during the early twentieth century; the development of African nationalism and political independence in the post-WW II era; the massive growth of cities during the twentieth century; the implementation of development initiatives and concurrent rise of middle classes, migrations, and misery (poverty) in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Throughout the semester, the course emphasizes enduring themes of diversity, mobility, and innovation as key to understanding Africa in the distant past and in the present. The course includes lectures together with group and individual learning activities; it aims to be simultaneously engaging, fun and challenging. The course will provide you with important introductory background knowledge about Africa and help you to think critically about news and other information you encounter about Africa and Africans in your daily life.

Learning Goals

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- place the names of most African countries, physical characteristics, and major cities on a map of Africa.
- articulate orally and in writing how diversity, mobility, and innovation are key and important themes in Africa's past and in its present.

- describe and analyze the occurrence and consequences of long-distance trade and travel to/from/within Africa from the thirteenth through the twentieth centuries CE, and their relationship to the emergence of states and other transformations in African society.
- explain the key characteristics of European colonization of Africa during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and articulate how those characteristics influenced diversity, mobility, and innovation there.
- detail the form that decolonization took in Africa, why this form of decolonization emerged, and what some of its consequences have been since the 1950s.
- analyze the gendered experiences of women in independent Africa and the challenges they have faced.
- articulate some of the development and economic efforts of African countries since independence, and how African citizens have experienced them.

Required Books

(Any edition of the following books is fine, whether print or electronic)

- D. T. Niane, ed., *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali* rev. ed. (London: Longman, 2006). ISBN 9781405849425. Originally published in French in 1960 with first English translation in 1965.
- Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (New York: Penguin, 1994). ISBN 9780385474542. Originally published in 1958. [Also free to read online via the African Writers Series database at MSEL]
- Heather J. Sharkey, *Living with Colonialism: Nationalism and Culture in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003). ISBN 9780520235595.
- Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present* **2nd edition if possible** (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 2019). ISBN 9781108727891. [Free online via the JHU library catalog; if you are purchasing, **try to purchase/read the 2nd edition** from 2019, which has a color photo on the cover of a blue sky and people lined up to vote, but the first edition with a greenish cover, from 2002, is also acceptable and is in the JHU Bookstore (the 2002 edition ISBN is 9780521776004)]
- Mariama Ba, *So Long a Letter* (Long Grove: Waveland Press, 2012). ISBN 9781577668060. Originally published in French in 1979; English translation in 1981. [Free to read online via the African Writers Series database at MSEL]

Written Assessments

- Map quizzes (to be completed by 11 pm on September 20 at online.seterra.com). For more information on how to complete the map quizzes please see Blackboard
 - Africa: Countries (100% in 5 minutes or less), 35 points
 - Africa: Physical Features (100% in 3 minutes or less), 15 points
 - Africa: Capitals (100% in 5 minutes or less), 35 points
 - Africa: Cities (100% in 2½ minutes or less), 15 points

- Two take-home exams (a midterm and final) which will be essay assessments based on course content, requiring you to answer questions by integrating information from the required readings, lectures, discussions, and other in-class activities.
 - Midterm: 2,250 words (~7 pages) covering weeks 1-6. Due as an upload at Blackboard on or before 11 pm, Friday, October 11. The exam question(s) will be available to you 2 weeks before the exam due date.
 - Final: 2,250 words (7 pages) Covers weeks 7-13. Due as an upload at Blackboard by the ending time of the JHU Registrar-scheduled final exam time for this class (see <https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/registrar/>). The exam question(s) will be available to you on the last day of class, December 4.
- One 2,250 word (~7-page) essay you develop according to your interests and understanding, using the course readings, lectures, and discussions, about how diversity, mobility, and innovation are enduring and important themes in African history. Your essay—which you should be planning for and working on from early in the class rather than leaving to the end—is due as an upload at Blackboard on or before 11 pm, Friday, November 22. For more information about the essay, please see Blackboard.

Course Due Dates (please put these reminders on your calendar)

- September 20 (Friday) before or by 11 pm: map quizzes must be completed and results mailed to the TA as described at Blackboard
- October 11 (Friday) before or by 11 pm: Midterm due
- November 22 (Friday) before or by 11 pm: Diversity, Mobility & Innovation essay due.
- Final Exam due by the ending time of the JHU Registrar-scheduled final exam time for this class (see <https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/registrar/>).

Grading

Assessment Instrument	Points	Total
Map Quizzes	Vary by quiz	100
Exams	275 points each	550
Essay	275	275
Professor's Assessment*	50 points	75
Total Points		1,000

*The professor's assessment is based on attendance and participation; i.e. absences and lack of participation will lower your assessment.

Important Statements

Academic Ethics: Students are expected to abide by the JHU Academic Ethics for Undergraduates (<https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/policies-guidelines/undergrad-ethics/>). I expect you not to cheat, lie, or plagiarize. You should not help another student cheat or engage in unfair competition. Students in my classes, where writing is important, are sometimes tempted

to plagiarize their writing assignments. The JHU Academic Ethics for Undergraduates policy defines plagiarism as “representing someone else’s information, ideas, or words as your own by failing to acknowledge the source.” For example, copying from books, articles, or internet sites and passing the work off as your own by not citing it and/or placing it in quotation marks is the most frequent mistake students make. I will deal with suspected plagiarism through the relevant policies set out by Johns Hopkins University. For more information on these, please visit the website link at the beginning of this paragraph.

Mental Health: The University and the instructors are aware that many students experience anxiety, depression, and other emotional challenges. If you would like to speak to a professional counselor, please visit the campus Counseling Center. Information is available on the Counseling Center's website:

<https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/counselingcenter/>

Class Schedule (Weekly readings must be completed by classtime on Monday)

Thursday, August 29 (Meeting as a Monday Class): Introduction to the Class

- No readings

Week One. Diversity, Mobility and Innovation: Key Themes in African History

Wednesday, September 4 (please watch, listen, and read these materials before our Wednesday, September 4 meeting; if you join the course late, please watch-listen-read these items as soon as you can)

- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Ted Talk, “The Danger of a Single Story” at https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story#t-1110058
- Isra Ibrahim, U.S. college student, explains her identity at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkcl3A7ga0k>
- Felicia Gomez, Jibril Hirbo, and Sara A. Tishkoff, "Genetic Variation and Adaptation in Africa: Implications for Human Evolution and Disease," *Cold Spring Harbor Perspectives in Biology* 6,7 (July 2014), 1-21.
- Sara A. Tishkoff lecture “Evolution and Adaptation in Africa: Implications for Health and Disease” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nn-Jv-cnma8>). A geneticist focusing on genetic variation in African populations talks about her work. This lecture is a mixture of things you will and won’t understand: focus on what you do understand and what the implications of the research findings might be.

Week Two. West & Northern African Connections: Trade, Islam, State Formation

September 9 & 11

- D.T. Niane, ed., *Sundiata, an Epic of Old Mali* (entire book).

Week Three. East Africa and the Indian Ocean: Exchanges of People, Culture, Things

September 16 & 18

- John Mugane, *The Story of Swahili* (Athens, Oh.: Ohio University Press, 2015), chapters 1-5 (pp. 1-107) [available electronically for free via the MSEL library catalogue].
- Jeremy Prestholdt, "On the Global Repercussions of East African Consumerism," *American Historical Review* 109,3 (June 2004), pp. 755-81.

Week Four. Slave Trading and Slavery: The Consequences of Forced Migration

September 23 & 25

- Philip D. Morgan, "Africa and the Atlantic, C. 1450 to C. 1820," in Jack P. Greene and Philip D. Morgan (eds.) *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 223-48.
- Pier M. Larson, "Horrid Journeying: Narratives of Enslavement and the Global African Diaspora," *Journal of World History* 19,4 (December 2008), pp. 431-464.
- Matthew S. Hopper, "Slaves of One Master: Globalization and the African Diaspora in Arabia in the Age of Empire," in Robert Harms, Bernard K. Freamon and David W. Blight, eds., *Indian Ocean Slavery in the Age of Abolition* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2013), pp. 223-40.

Week Five. The Zulu Kingdom: Power, Conflict, and Transformation in a South African State

September 30 & October 2

- "Rise of the Zulu Kingdom," in *Reader's Digest Illustrated History of South Africa: The Real Story* (Pleasantville, NY: The Reader's Digest Association, 1988), pp. 80-87.
- Elizabeth A. Eldredge, "Shaka's Rule: Social Configuration and Social Control," chapter 10 in *The Creation of the Zulu Kingdom, 1815-1828: War, Shaka, and the Consolidation of Power* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 231-252.
- Sean Hanretta, "Women, Marginality and the Zulu State: Women's Institutions and Power in the Early Nineteenth Century," *Journal of African History* 39,3 (1998), pp. 389-415.

Week Six. European Colonization: Exercising Choices during Conquest

October 7 & 9

- Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (entire book).

Week Seven. Administration on the Cheap: Colonialism and the Seeds of its own Destruction

October 14 & 16

- Heather Sharkey, *Living with Colonialism*, pp. 1-119.

Week Eight. Key Changes of the 20th Century: Urbanization, Labor Migration, Land Values

October 21 & 23

- Moses E. Ochonu, "Africans and the Colonial Economy," in Martin S. Shanguhya and Toyin Falola, eds., *The Palgrave Handbook of African Colonial and Postcolonial History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 123-143. [This book is available to read for free via the MSEL library catalog].
- Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, introduction-chapter 2 (introduction + chaps 1 & 2)
- Sara Berry, "Debating the Land Question in Africa," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44,4 (2002), pp. 638-668.

Week Nine. Decolonization: Choosing Nationalisms and Nations (and their Consequences)

October 28 & 30

- Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, chapters 3-4.
- Sharkey, *Living with Colonialism*, pp. 120-41.
- Ba, *So Long a Letter*, chapters 1-14.

Week Ten. Experiences of Political Independence: Women, Development Initiatives, the Gatekeeper State

November 4 & 6

- Mariama Ba, *So Long a Letter*, chapters 15-27.
- Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, chapter 5.

Week Eleven. Cities, Governance & Development in Postcolonial Africa

November 11 & 13

- Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, chapter 7.
- Edgar Pieterse and Susan Parnell, "Africa's Urban Revolution in Context," in Susan Parnell and Edgar Pieterse (eds.) *Africa's Urban Revolution* (London: Zed Books, 2014), pp. 1-17.
- World Bank Group, 2017 report: "Africa's Cities: Opening Doors to the World" (<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/25896>) Download the PDF at this link and read pp. 1-26. This publication represents typical World Bank (liberal economic) views of African economies and cities, which you should become familiar with.

Week Twelve. Gender Issues in Independent Africa

November 18 & 20

- Naomi N. Nkealah, "Conceptualizing Feminism(s) in Africa: The Challenges Facing African Women Writers and Critics," *The English Academy Review* 23,1 (2006), pp. 133-141.
- Stamp, Patricia. "Burying Otieno: The Politics of Gender and Ethnicity in Kenya," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 16,4 (1991), pp. 808-845.
- Andrew Ivaska, "'The Age of Minis': Secretaries, City Girls, and Masculinity Downtown," Chapter 2 in Andrew Ivaska, *Cultured States: Youth, Gender, and Modern Style in 1960s Dar es Salaam* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), pp. 86-123.

Week Thirteen. A Complex Present: Economic Growth, Rising Middle Classes & Misery

December 2 & 4

- Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, chapter 8.
- Pierre Jacquinet, "Africa's 'Middle Class': Realities, Issues, and Perspectives," *Afrique Contemporaine* No. 244, Issue 4 of year (2012), pp. 17-31 (*please choose the English language version of the electronic journal—the journal appears in both English and French electronic versions—the PDF, electronic, English version of this article is actually paginated I-XIV*).
- Marie-Laurence Flahaux and Hein de Hass, "African Migration: Trends, Patterns, Drivers," *Comparative Migration Studies* 4,1 (2016), 1-25.