AS.100.378 | Africa and the Atlantic World | Spring 2024

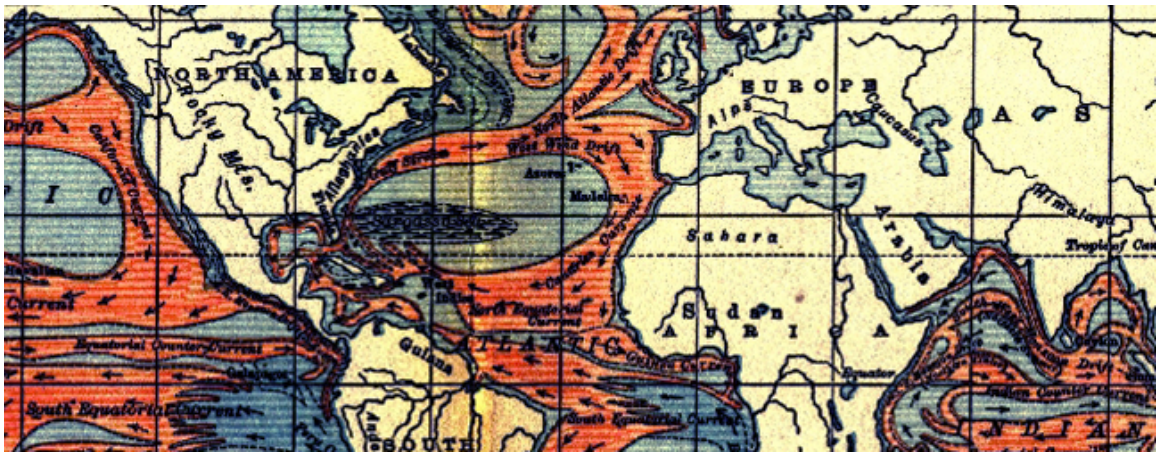
T/TH 10:30-11:45
Gilman 186
Professor D. Gondola
Anna Roberts (TA)

Office: Gilman 338C
Office Hours: TTH 12:00-2:00p
cgondol1@jhu.edu
arober80@jh.edu

Nota bene: This syllabus and other course materials can be found on https://canvas.jhu.edu.

Course Description

This course is designed to help students explore and understand an era, lasting from approximately the mid-15th century to the late 1800s, in which Africa figured prominently in the Atlantic world, its peopling, economy, religions, cultures, and innovations. Shaped by the Atlantic slave trade, this period of encounters between Europe and Africa announced the dawn of a new, global order fueled by the production of raw materials in the new territories Europeans carved out in the Americas with enslaved labor drawn from the Atlantic coast and the interior of Africa. To understand the ways in which Africans shaped the Atlantic World, the course will first survey pre-Atlantic African polities and culture. In addition to examining the role Africa played in the formation of the Atlantic world, we will reflect in critical terms on the circulation of people, commodities, technology, and ideas that have shaped Africa and the Atlantic world. Finally, the course will look comparatively at the impact on Africa and the rest of the "Black Atlantic." This class combines a lecture format with in-class discussions of essential assigned readings, both primary and secondary sources.



Course Structure

This course meets twice a week. Attendance is mandatory and key to your success. Because this is a reading/writing intensive class, I expect you to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned themes and readings during every session. While I will present a series of short lectures, we will spend most of every class session discussing the readings. Each of you will be responsible for presenting the readings, for a given lecture, as part of your participation grade. First, you will briefly articulate the main argument, then share with the class 4-5 questions for

general discussion. (These questions should be posted on Canvas by either Monday or Wednesday and may be supplemented by me.)

Learning Objectives

In this course, you are all historians. Therefore, the assignments will encourage you to improve your ability to communicate effectively through writing and speech, to critically think about the course material, and to integrate and apply your knowledge in a variety of contexts. By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- **Provide** a sound definition of the "Atlantic World" and assess its relevance as an analytical category.
- **Understand** Africa's role in and impact on the formation of the Atlantic World.
- **Identify** significant elements of the communities and cultures of the Atlantic World, especially the Black Atlantic, and recognize their complexities.
- **Analyze** significant impact of European colonization on African history and contrast alternative interpretations of historical events.
- **Reflect** on and examine both shared and diverse historical experiences that shaped the Atlantic World in the pre-modern period.

Requirements and Evaluation

Nota Bene: There are no make-ups and no extra-credit assignments in this class. Written Assignments must be turned in on the day they are due. Any late assignment will not be graded. This policy will be strictly enforced.

Assignment	Due Date	%
Great Zimbabwe Project Due - **Individual** | (500-600 words)	February 8	10%
Pre-Columbian Transatlantic Contact Project Due - **Individual** | (500-600 words)	February 20	10%
Midterm Exam (Canvas)	March 14	20%
Slave Voyages Project Due - **Collaborative**| (1000-1,200 words)	March 29	10%
Class Participation	April 20	10%
Final Paper Due – **Individual** | Final (1,000-1,200 words)	April 23	20%
Final Exam (Canvas)	May 6	20%
Total		100%

There will be four writing assignments in this class:

Great Zimbabwe is in an individual project based on original research on the origin of Great Zimbabwe: https://archive.org/details/greatzimbabwemas00hall/page/n9/mode/2up After reading R. N Hall's Great Zimbabwe (1905) as the main primary document, students are asked to write an individual 500-600-word essay. First, present Hall's theory/evidence about the origin and founders of Great Zimbabwe. Then, using secondary sources, critique his theory and provide a valid theory that accounts for GZ origins.

Pre-Columbian Transatlantic Contacts is based on evidence provided by Ivan Van Sertima and Jack D. Forbes, supplemented by other scholarly sources (Leo Wiener, Niede Guidon, Pathé Diagne, etc.) that there existed contacts between Africa and the Americas prior to Columbus' voyages. Drawing on these sources, you are expected to discuss the validity of these theories.

Slave Voyages is a collaborative quantitative research project that uses the following primary source: http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/index.faces. Using the database, construct a quantitative narrative of the transatlantic slave trade. Focus on one specific period and describe/analyze (based on the main primary sources supplemented with at least one other primary source: e.g., a slave narrative such as the autobiography of Equiano Olauday) the singularity of your period with a focus on the middle passage. Be creative!

Final Paper on a topic chosen in consultation with Dr. Gondola.

Readings:
All required readings for the course are available at Barnes and Noble and I suggest you purchase the required book(s). I will be distributing beforehand texts and articles we will discuss in class. I strongly recommend that you read them at least twice before coming to class. Make notes in your texts or on a separate sheet of paper and highlight or underline the specific passages you want to discuss.

Books:

Sylviane Diouf (ed.), *Fighting the Slave Trade: West African Strategies*, Ohio University Press, 2003 (Chapter 11: Joseph E. Inikori, The Struggle against the Transatlantic Slave Trade: The Role of the State).

Toyin Falola & Kevin D. Roberts (eds.), *The Atlantic World, 1450-2000*, Indiana University Press, 2008 (Introduction & Pearson: Chapter 1: The World of the Atlantic before the Atlantic World: Africa, Europe and the Americas before 1450).

Roquinaldo Ferreira, *Cross-Cultural Exchange in the Atlantic World: Angola and Brazil During the Era of the Slave Trade*, Cambridge University Press, 2012 (Chapter 4: Slavery and Society).

Jack D. Forbes, *Africans and Native Americans: The Language of Race and the Evolution of Red-Black Peoples* (Second Edition), University of Illinois Press, 1993.

Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, Harvard University Press, 1993 (Chapter 1: Black Atlantic as a counterculture to Modernity).

Linda M. Heywood & John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585-1660*, Cambridge University Press, 2007 (Chapter 2: The Portuguese, Kongo, and Ndongo and the Origins of Atlantic Creole, to 1607).

Barbaro Martinez Ruiz, *Kongo Graphic and Other Narratives of the Sign*, Temple University Press, 2013 (Chapter 2: The Atlantic Passage: The Spread of Kongo Belief in Africa to the Americas).

Sydney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*, Viking, 1985 (Chapter 3: Production).

David Northrup, *Africa's Discovery of Europe, 1450-1850*, Oxford University Press (Chapter 1: First Sights, Lasting Impressions and Chapter 4: Atlantic Imports and Technologies)

Barbara Reeves et al. (editors), *Competing Kingdoms Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812–1960*, Duke University Press, 2010 (Sylvia M. Jacobs, "Three African

American Women Missionaries in the Congo, 1887–1899: The Confluence of Race, Culture, Identity, and Nationality").

Stuart Schwartz, *Sugar plantations in the formation of Brazilian society: Bahia, 1550-1835*, Cambridge University Press, 1985 (Chapter 1: The Sugar Plantation).

Ivan Van Sertima, *They Came Before Columbus: The African Presence in Ancient America, Random House*, 1976 (Chapter 2: The visible Witnesses and Chapter 3: The Mariner Prince of Mali).

Philippe Wamba, *Kinship: A Family's Journey in Africa and America*, Dutton/Penguin, 1999 (Chapter 1: Middle Passages).

Documentary:

> **Africans in America: Part I: The Terrible Transformation | PBS Series, 1998**
> "How did America build a new nation based on principles of liberty and equality while justifying the existence of slavery? Did American slavery and American freedom have to exist side by side in the nation? How has this history shaped current views about race? Africans in America: America's Journey through Slavery, takes on these tough questions in a four-part documentary series which debuted in October 1998 on PBS"

Class Participation

The physical or virtual classroom is an environment of learning *par excellence*. Not only do students learn from the instructor and by their own critical analysis of the material but they also learn from fellow students. It is, of course, an intimate and ever-changing space where students are constantly asked to share opinions and critically analyze the issues as they are being presented by the instructor and fellow students. Participation in class discussions is instrumental in the student's ability to analyze and assimilate information. Do not feel shy to ask a question, raise an issue or interject a thought. There are several ways to get prepared for class discussions. Here are some tips on how you can enrich discussion of the course materials: (1) Spend time before each class preparing for discussion by making notes in your texts or on a separate sheet of paper pertaining to specific passages from the readings that you want to discuss. (2) During class discussions, when raising a question or point about the assigned readings, make specific references to texts, authors and page numbers in question. (3) Listen carefully to an interlocutor's question and position before responding and making your own comment. Try not to make assumptions about your interlocutor's intentions or motivations based on his/her/their gender or origin. Never hesitate to ask your interlocutor to clarify or restate her/his/their position.

Paper Grading Policy

We believe that a grade is less a reward for or a penalty against the student's intelligence than a reflection of the student's proficiency to write clearly and persuasively a paper on a given topic. Organization and pertinence of ideas, as well as grammar and clarity, are among some the chief criteria we use in grading a paper. We give the following grades:

A. means that the paper is written with grace and clarity. The student has demonstrated a mastery in writing clearly and organizing ideas methodically on a given topic. Ideas are not randomly thrown here and there but are complementary and cohesive elements of a well-organized paper.

B. is above average. Ideas flow well. Grammatical errors are minimal.

C. is for an average paper that complies with the topic assigned or chosen. The student has done just what I asked for. Grammar is fair and content is intelligible.

D. is for a paper written with a level of grammatical errors that sometimes hinders the comprehension. Ideas exist but are arranged without a clear logic. Some of them are obscure and unintelligible. Sentences are confusing…

F. is for a paper quickly and poorly written, with incomplete sentences, and often off-subject. This grade signifies an unacceptable performance in writing a specific assignment. Usually, the content can hardly be grasped because of a lack of clarity and organization.

Here are some writing tips:

1. "Have something to say, and say it as clearly as you can. That is the only secret of style." Matthew Arnold.
2. "The great enemy of clear language is insincerity." George Orwell.
3. When writing a paper, do not make unsupported assertions. Try to present the most convincing case for your argument. Think carefully and thoroughly about the evidence you will use to support your position. Always anticipate opposing critiques of your position and opposing arguments. Try to answer or address opposing positions as you present your own position. This will demonstrate that you are aware of alternative viewpoints and that you can propose and defend a thesis.
4. Your paper should not be a first-draft presentation and organization of your thoughts. Give yourself ample time to read the assigned materials and to consult appropriate sources before making final decisions about your thesis statement and the supporting evidence which will provide structure for your argument and conclusion. For example, you might begin writing your final paper by making very strong statements about a point you aim at defending. However, in consulting the works of scholars in the field, you may see the need to modify your original thesis, or you may be compelled to abandon it altogether. This is to be expected in scholarly research and writing. You should not feel reluctant to change your argument if your reasons for changing it are more convincing than your original reasons for posing it.
5. Please take advantage of all the resources available to you when planning to write your paper. Never hesitate to ask reference librarians for help in trying to locate scholarly sources. Never hesitate to ask me for extra help in thinking through your ideas for the paper. Discusing a topic before researching and writing can help you think of new ideas and new approaches and sources. It can also save time.
6. Always use page numbering and a 12 inch-font. Do not hesitate to use footnotes I you think they might clarify your demonstration. A bibliography should always figure at the end of your paper. Double-spacing is a requirement.
7. Finally, always proofread your paper before you hand it in to be graded. Not only does proofread help rid your paper of any grammatical errors and typos that can make its content less comprehensible and appealing, but it also helps to consider re-wording a sentence or improving an existing idea. Proofreading can make a difference in your grade.

Student Dishonesty

1. Cheating
"A Student must not submit substantial portions of the same academic work for credit or honors more than once without permission of the instructor to whom the work is being submitted." This is one among many forms of cheating. For more details, please refer to the *Student Conduct Code*.

2. pla.gia.rize *vb* –**rized**; -**riz.ing** *vt* [*plagiary*] (1716)
: to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
: use (a created production) without crediting the source ~ *vi* : to commit literary theft : present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source — **pla.gia.riz.er** *n*
— From the *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Tenth Edition, 1997, p. 888.

We have entered an age where the amount of information generated and the technology available to retrieve it have made it easier for anybody to take *verbatim* words and ideas belonging to somebody else, without the author's permission, without reference to the authorship, and by passing them as his or her own. This is unacceptable, especially in the academic environment where copyright laws are supposed to be known and respected by all. Please always abide by the following rules:

a. Never use and idea, that you have borrowed, without referring to the authorship.
b. Figures, when not your own, should always be referenced.
c. There is nothing wrong in inserting quotes in your work, but always give the source (author, work, date and place of publication, publisher and page number).
d. I am open to students using their style of preference (I use Turabian). But whether you use MLA, Chicago, etc. be consistent.

While it is hard for some of us to assimilate that words and ideas are also property and as such are subject to copyright laws, we should always remember the Golden Rule. Canvas has also a unique agreement with "Turnitin.com" that allows faculty to run electronic papers submitted by students through this document search utility. **Hopkins has a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism and I will give a grade "0" to any plagiarized assignment and report the student to the Office of the Director of Student Conduct.**

Civility Statement. The physical and virtual classroom is a learning community in which we all need to collaborate in order to meet our goals. We can only create a positive learning environment through positive speech and positive behavior. Rude, sarcastic, obscene, disrespectful, insensitive speech and behavior will negatively impact the classroom learning community and impede the process of learning. Positive speech and behavior create and nurture a safe learning environment where the instructor and the students respect one another and freely share knowledge. All students enrolled in this course have a responsibility to create and maintain a safe and positive environment conducive to learning and intellectual growth. A learning-friendly and safe environment is one that is free of distractions, engages and nurtures all participants in the learning process, does not inhibit, frustrate, demean or dehumanize any individual or group. Students who use rude and inflammatory language, who distract other students, who engage in inappropriate behavior, and thus obstruct the learning process, will be asked to leave as a first preventive step.

Schedule of Classes

(Subject to change)

I. Introduction: Defining the Atlantic World/History

January 23: Introduction to the Course

- Falola and Roberts (eds.): *The Atlantic World: 1450-200*: "Introduction"

25: What is the Atlantic World?

- Games: Atlantic History: Definitions, Challenges and Opportunities
- Coclanis: Atlantic World or Atlantic/World?

II. Pre-Atlantic African Worlds: West/East Africa

30: Diverse Africa: One Continent, Many Worlds

- Green: Explaining Africa's Diversity

1: Before the Atlantic World

- Pearson: The World of the Atlantic before the Atlantic World: Africa, Europe and the Americas before 1450
- Thornton: The Birth of an Atlantic World

III. Pre-Atlantic African Worlds: Central/Southern Africa

February 6: Great Zimbabwe

- Pikirayi: Great Zimbabwe in Historical Archaeology
- Ndoro: Great Zimbabwe
- R.N. Hall, *Great Zimbabwe, Mashonaland, Rhodesia* (1905) https://archive.org/details/greatzimbabwemas00hall/page/n9/mode/2up

8: Hausa City-States and Swahili Cities

February 8 Great Zimbabwe Essay Due (10%)

- Griffeth: The Hausa City-States from 1450 to 1804
- Berg: The Swahili Community of Mombassa, 1500-1900

13: The Empire of Mali: Sand Roads Across the Sahara

- Conrad: Empires of Medieval West Africa

IV. A Pre-1500 African & American Atlantic World?

February 15: Contacts Before 1500

- Forbes: Africans and Americans: Inter-Continental Contacts Across the Atlantic, to 1500
- Van Sertima: *They Came Before Columbus* (Chapter 2: The visible Witnesses and Chapter 3: The Mariner Prince of Mali).

20: Presence and Prestige in Medieval European Cities

- Northrup: First Sights, Lasting Impressions

22: The Portuguese and Kongo Connection

February 20 Pre-Columbia Contacts Due (10%)

• Forbes: The intensification of Contacts: Trans-Atlantic Slavery Interaction, After 1500
• Heywood & Thornton: The Portuguese, Kongo, and Ndongo and the Origins of Atlantic Creole, to 1607

V. The Slave Trade and the Formation of a Black Atlantic

27: Slavery and African Societies
- Lovejoy: Africa and Slavery

29: The Making of Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade
- Eltis: A Brief Overview of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade
- Northrup: Atlantic Imports and Technology
- http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/index.faces

February 29 Slave Voyages Project Due (10%)

March

5: Sugar and Slavery
- Mintz: Sweetness and Power (Chapter 3: Production)
- Schwartz: The Sugar Plantation: From the Old World to the New

7: Fighting the Slave Trade
- Inikori: The Struggle against the Transatlantic Slave Trade: The Role of the State
- Richardson: Shipboard Revolts, African Authority, and the Atlantic Slave Trade

12: Impact on Africa
- Nunn: The Long-Term Effects of Africa's Slave Trades
- Obikili: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and Local Political Fragmentation in Africa

March 14 MIDTERM EXAM CANVAS (20%)

14: **MIDTERM EXAM (ON CANVAS)**

SPRING BREAK March 18-22 SPRING BREAK

VI. Racial Issues Across the Atlantic Rims

March

26: From African to African American
- Berlin: From Creole to African: Atlantic Creole and the Origins of African-American Society
- Documentary: Africans in America (PBS Series)

28: Race and Class in the Iberian-American Atlantic World
- Wade: Black and Indigenous People in Latin America
- Trent: Rethinking Palmares: Slave Resistance in Colonial Brazil

2: The Atlantic in Turmoil: The Haitian Revolution
- Reinhardt: Hushing the Haitian Revolution
- Dupuy: Class, Race and, Nation: Unresolved Contradictions of the Saint-Domingue Revolution

4: The Impact of the Haitian Revolution on the Atlantic Rims

• Hunt: Toussaint's Image in Antebellum America

VII. Panafricanism and the Atlantic World

April 9: Abolitions
- Van Der Linden: Abolition of Slave Trade and Slavery
- Eltis: Was Abolition of Slave significant?

11: Pan-Africanism
- Kasanda: Exploring Pan-Africanism's Theories: From Race-Based Solidarity to Political Unity and Beyond

April 16: Black Missioning to Africa
- Killingray: The Black Atlantic Missionary Movement and Africa: 1780s-1920s
- Jacobs: Three African American Women Missionaries in the Congo, 1887–1899: The Confluence of Race, Culture, Identity, and Nationality

18: The Liberian Experiment
- Allen: Liberia and the Atlantic World in the Nineteenth Century and Its Effects
- Akpan: Black Imperialism in Liberia

VIII. Beyond the Atlantic World

April 23: The Black Atlantic Diaspora

April 23 Final Paper DUE (20%)

- Gilroy: Black Atlantic as a counterculture to Modernity
- Patterson & Kelly: Unfinished Migrations: Reflections on the African Diaspora and the Making of the Modern World

25: Conclusion: Afropolitanism and the Atlantic World
- Balakrishnan, Afropolitanism and the End of Black Nationalism
- Wamba: Middle Passages

May 6: **FINAL EXAM (CANVAS | 9AM EST to 11:59PM EST)**

May 6 FINAL EXAM CANVAS (20%)