

HISTORY OF AFRICA I
21:510:263
Fall 2020

Dr. Habtamu Tegegne
Office: Conklin 329
Office Hours by appointment
Email: ht254@newark.rutgers.edu

Course Description

This course explores key developments in African history from human origin to 1850. This period has seen vast cultural changes in African societies, the rise of empires and kingdoms, and the incorporation of Africa into the modern world system. Through lectures, readings, and discussions we will look at the political, social, and cultural history of Africa, exploring some major historical processes and events that shaped and continue to reshape the continent and lend themselves to discussions and inquiry.

The course is divided into four broad part.

I. Origins and Foundations of African Civilization. This section deals with the general introduction of the land, geography and peoples of Africa, the history of man and his evolution, the emergence of food-producing communities.

II. Ancient and Classical African Civilizations. This section discusses some of Africa's very old and great civilizations and societies which flourished in the Nile valley. First, we will consider the Egyptian civilization and review the vigorous debate regarding the identity of Pharaonic Egyptians and the relation between ancient Egypt and African and European civilizations and cultures. Then we will look at Kush and its Meroitic and Christian Nubian successors and the Empire of Aksum.

III. Medieval African Civilizations. This section covers 'medieval' African societies and kingdoms including the succession of empires which flourished in the middle sections of the Niger River in West Africa, the forest states in west Africa and the states of southern and central Africa. Special emphasis will be given to the Empire of Mali and to oral tradition of its founder and greatest king Sundiata.

IV. Early Modern Africa. This section deals with the history of early modern Africa and its engagement with the larger world. We will explore in-depth how world religions and the trans-oceanic and inland trade networks and allied economic activities and political institutions have developed, changed and affected African societies from circa CE 1000 to 1850. The last part of this section of the course then takes up the commercial and religious revolutions of the 19th century and the encounter between Europeans and Africans in southern Africa and the accompanying significant social and political reordering across Africa.

Course goals

- encourage the development of critical thinking and of writing skills.
- introduce students to basic concepts in the study of south African history
- provide them with a basic historical outline of African history to 1850
- developed a basic understanding of the historical forces—both external and internal—that contributed to the diversity of Africa’s cultural, political and social terrains as well as the common historical experiences and roots that tie together African peoples and societies.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

Grading in the course will be based on an evaluation of student performance in the term paper, participation in online discussion, midterm and final exams. Points will be available as follows:

Final Exam:	30%
Midterm Exam:	30%
Term paper	15%
Participation in discussion:	25%

Grading Scale

In the final determination of the letter grades, I will use “+.” Grading for the course will be as follows:

- A grades (90-100);
- B grades (80-89);
- C grades (70-79);
- D grades (60-69); and
- F grade (below 60).

EVALUATION DETAILS

Participation in Discussions (worth 25% of your final grade):

Constructive and energetic participation in online discussion boards is a key element of the course and is worth 25% of your final grade. Everyone will be assigned to a discussion group. You are required to post discussion board messages for the Readings specifically assigned to your discussion group. **Three [3]** postings or discussion board messages are expected from you: **one [1]** posting in response to a question posed by the instructor, **two [2] replies** to the initial postings or replies of other students in the group. The discussion topics/questions are posted on the course website most Sundays. **You are allowed to make the initial postings only Monday through Thursday before 11:59 pm.** But the replies can be made any time between Monday and Sunday until 11:59pm.

The discussions are partly based on primary sources which are found either as excerpts in the textbook or online, which can be accessed for free. The link to some of the online primary sources is provided in the course syllabus. The excerpts of the primary sources in the textbook

and those found online complement the secondary reading in the TEXTBOOK and are, in fact, evidence used by the textbook's authors to build their narrative on certain topics of *African History*. The online discussion will provide you with the opportunity to learn how to synthesize, analyze, and evaluate information provided in primary sources. What you should be looking for when you read primary sources will be given in the first week of the semester. You are responsible for the online discussions. Both the **quality and the quantity** of participation are important. It is in your best interest to read postings and actively participate in online discussion. Your postings must be thoughtful and reasoned, clear, and written in complete sentences and in formal academic English. Avoid abbreviations and colloquial language. Your postings will also be evaluated for spelling, syntax, and punctuation. You must also be respectful to your colleagues when you reply to their postings. If you disagree with them, you must express your disagreement professionally and in a way that does not offend anyone.

Paper (15%)

There is one assigned paper for this course which is worth 15 % of your course grade. The writing guideline and the topics will be given well in advance of the due date. You have to turn in your papers on the due date. Late papers will not be accepted for full credit without any documented valid excuse. Your paper is due **on Sunday, October 11**. Turn your paper on blackboard. In addition, please note, submission of a term paper and of a final exam are course requirements. Failure to submit them, regardless of total points accrued for other assignments, will result in an "I" grade for the course.

Late Policy

Turn your paper according to the official (syllabus stated) due date. Five points will be deducted for each day your assignment, including the term paper, is late. You may only ask for an extension at least 48 hours before the due date and only if you have a valid reason and valid documentation. None will be accepted after the end of the semester. Doctor's notes that are dated either more than 24 hours after the onset of illness or after the due date will not be accepted. Even if you have obtained a doctor's note, you will be penalized until the day I receive your doctor's note.

Exams (60% of the course grade)

The midterm exam will be held on Friday, **October 25**. The final exam will be held on Wednesday, December 16. You are expected to take the exams based on the schedule indicated in the course syllabus.

Students are required to take the exams based on the schedule indicated in the course syllabus. The term paper and the exams are course requirements. Despite the total points you earned, absence from the exams will result in overall failure in the course. The final exam must be taken based on the university official final exam schedule. You may only ask for taking the midterm or final exam on a date different from the official (syllabus-stated) day at least 36 hours before the due date and only if you have a valid reason and documentation.

Exam and Paper

Due Dates:

Term Paper: Sunday, 11 October
Midterm Exam: Friday, 25 October
Final Exam: Wednesday, 16 December

COURSE WEBSITE

Blackboard is our best means of communication. You will need access to the website in order to complete some of the readings, to get paper topics, exams, participation in online discussion, announcements, and other information of interest and importance. By now everyone who is enrolled to this course should have access to the course site. You will need to be able to access the website at least three times a week; on the evenings before Tuesday and Thursday and on Sundays in order to download the weekly assignments, lectures, PowerPoints, and other relevant files.

Copyright

Lecture notes, slides, handout materials, examinations and assignments developed for this course are the intellectual property of the course instructor. These materials have been developed for student use only and they are not intended for wider dissemination outside of the course. Posting, selling and providing course material to third-party websites violates an instructor's intellectual property rights, and the American Copyright Law. Failure to follow these instructions violates the university's Code of Student Conduct, and will result in disciplinary measures.

Decorum

I value and welcome all kinds of comments and opinions in online discussion. Feel free to express your opinion in a way which is professional and does not offend anyone. My important and simple course rule is that we respect each other. Avoid any rude, or inappropriate comments.

Accommodation and Support Statement

Rutgers University Newark (RU-N) is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students and the University as a whole. RU-N has identified the following resources to further the mission of access and support:

For Individuals with Disabilities: The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. Once a student has completed the ODS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and reasonable accommodations are determined to be necessary and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be provided. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at ods.rutgers.edu. Contact ODS at (973)353-5375 or via email at ods@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Individuals who are Pregnant: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy. Students may contact

the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance at (973) 353-1906 or via email at TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Absence Verification: The Office of the Dean of Students can provide assistance for absences related to religious observance, emergency or unavoidable conflict (e.g., illness, personal or family emergency, etc.). Students should refer to [University Policy 10.2.7](#) for information about expectations and responsibilities. The Office of the Dean of Students can be contacted by calling (973) 353-5063 or emailing deanofstudents@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Individuals with temporary conditions/injuries: The Office of the Dean of Students can assist students who are experiencing a temporary condition or injury (e.g., broken or sprained limbs, concussions, or recovery from surgery). Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury should submit a request using the following link: <https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu>.

For English as a Second Language (ESL): The Program in American Language Studies (PALS) can support students experiencing difficulty in courses due to English as a Second Language (ESL) and can be reached by emailing PALS@newark.rutgers.edu to discuss potential supports.

For Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance can assist students who are experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking. Students can report an incident to the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance by calling (973) 353-1906 or emailing TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. Incidents may also be reported by using the following link: tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm. For more information, students should refer to the University's Student Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence, Relationship Violence, Stalking and Related Misconduct located at <http://compliance.rutgers.edu/title-ix/about-title-ix/title-ix-policies/>.

For support related to interpersonal violence: The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance can provide any student with confidential support. The office is a **confidential resource** and does *not* have an obligation to report information to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Students can contact the office by calling (973) 353-1918 or emailing run.vpva@rutgers.edu. There is also a confidential text-based line available to students; students can text (973) 339-0734 for support.

For Crisis and Concerns: The Campus Awareness Response and Education (CARE) Team works with students in crisis to develop a support plan to address personal situations that might impact their academic performance. Students, faculty and staff may contact the CARE Team by using the following link: tinyurl.com/RUNCARE or emailing careteam@rutgers.edu.

For Stress, Worry, or Concerns about Well-being: The Counseling Center has confidential therapists available to support students. Students should reach out to the Counseling Center to schedule an appointment: counseling@newark.rutgers.edu or (973) 353-5805. If you are not quite ready to make an appointment with a therapist but are interested in self-help, check out *TAO at*

Rutgers-Newark for an easy, web-based approach to self-care and support: <https://tinyurl.com/RUN-TAO>.

For emergencies, call 911 or contact Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD) by calling (973) 353-5111.

- Link to “Technology Resources for Students” page: <https://coronavirus.rutgers.edu/technology-resources-for-students/>.
- Contact information for OIT-Newark Help Desk: <https://runit.rutgers.edu/hd/>.

Plagiarism

You are expected to follow the student guideline concerning academic honesty and conduct. All work must be your own. If you have questions about plagiarism, you can see me. Plagiarism is a serious offence and is punishable, under the university code of conduct. Any instance of plagiarism will result in failure in this course. There is a very good statement on plagiarism on the American Historical Association's webpage. The American Historical Association's definition of plagiarism can be found at:

http://historians.org/governance/pd/Curriculum/plagiarism_defining.htm. Be sure to read it carefully and closely. For a full discussion of Rutgers University's policies regarding academic integrity consult the following website: <http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/oas/ai>. According to the RU Academic integrity policy:

‘Plagiarism is the use of another person’s words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and both direct quotation and paraphrasing must be cited properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline or as required by the instructor in a course.’

As stated in the academic integrity policy, some common instances of plagiarism are:

- Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution.
- Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one’s own words another person’s written words or ideas as if they were one’s own.
- Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement.
- Incorporating into one’s work graphs, drawings, photographs, diagrams, tables, spreadsheets, computer programs, or other non-textual material from other sources without proper attribution.

Required texts

Robert Harms, *Africa in Global History with Sources* (2018)

D.T. Niane, *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali* (1982).

Any additional primary sources listed below under the schedule are freely available online. All the required reading for the course is contained in the two books, the online sources, and the class notes.

SCHEDULE

Below is the course schedule that we will follow in the course of the semester. The schedule is subject to revision. We might drop, add, or exchange readings according to our specific interests.

Part I: Origins/Foundations of African Civilizations/Cultures

Week 1 (T/R, September 01/03): Introduction to the Study of Africa and African History
Why study African history, Visual Images of and from Africa; Common Preconceptions of the African Past; Notions of Africa; Geography, Human Habitation, History & Concepts

Reading:

THIS SYLLABUS IN ITS ENTIRETY

Week 2 (T/R, September 08/10): African environment & human origins; lifestyles (foraging, farming, and pastoralism); Peoples and languages of Africa

Reading:

Harms, *Africa in Global History*, 10-39.

Part II: Ancient and Classical African Civilizations (c. 2700 BCE – 700 CE)

Week 3 (T/R, September 15/17): Ancient Kingdoms and Classical African Civilizations I

Egypt in African history

Reading:

Harms, *Africa in Global History*, 41-85.

[Online]:

Accounts of Meröe, Kush, and Aksum, c. 430 BCE – 550 CE

<http://legacy.fordham.edu/Halsall/ancient/nubia1.asp>

On Afrocentric view of African History

Ann Macy Roth: Building Bridges to Afrocentrism:

Ibrahim Sundiata: Afrocentrism: The Argument We're Really Having

http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/afrocent_roth.html

The Black Athena Debate

Summary of the debate: <http://academic.reed.edu/humanities/110tech/BlackAthena.html>

Bernal on Lefkowitz, 'Review of Lefkowitz', ed. *Not Out of Africa*

<http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/1996/96.04.05.html>

Lefkowitz on Bernal:

<http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/1996/96.04.19.html>

Dr. Charles S. Finch III, M.D., 'Response to Mary Lefkowitz's Not Out of Africa'

http://www.melanet.com/clegg_series/maat0497.html

A Conspiracy Theory: http://www.melanet.com/clegg_series/june4.html

Week 4 (T/R, September 22/24): Ancient Kingdoms and Classical African Civilizations II
Empire of Kush; the kingdoms Meroe-Nubia; Aksumite

Ethiopia (c. 1,000 B.C.—800 A.D.)
Harms, *Africa in Global History*, 41-85.

PART III: THE MIDDLE AGE OF AFRICAN HISTORY

Week 5 (T/R, September 29/ Thursday 01): Trading Kingdoms of the Western Sudan, to 1600
The Trans-Saharan Trade & the Sudanic Kingdoms (700-1450); Literacy, Orality, State
& Society in West Africa

Reading:

Harms, *Africa in Global History*, 125-146.

Niane, *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*.

Glimpses of the Kingdom of Ghana in 1067 CE:

<http://web.archive.org/web/20010210035839/http://www.humanities.ccnycuny.edu/history/reader/ghana.htm>

Week 6 (T/R, October 06/08): The Varieties of States and Societies in West African Forest;
The Guinea Coast and the Rise of the Forest Kingdoms.
Readings: TBA

Term paper due October 11 at 11:59 pm.

Week 7, (T/R, October 13/15): State and Society in East, Central, and South Africa
The Dispersion of the Bantu-speaking People; the Empire of Great Zimbabwe; Central
African Kingdoms; the Kingdom of the Congo.

Readings:

Harms, *Africa in Global History*, 149-151, 187-202, 231-235.

Part IV: Africa and the World Systems (c. 1000–1800 CE)

Week 8 (T/R, October 20/22): Africa and Religious Worlds
Early Christianity in Africa (Egypt, Nubia and Ethiopia); Africa and the Islamic World.

Readings:

Harms, *Africa in Global History*, 96-123.

[Online”

Islam and Indigenous African Culture:

<http://web.archive.org/web/20010605222535/http://web-dubois.fas.harvard.edu/DuBois/Baobab/narratives/islam/islam.html>

John Hunwick, “Africa and Islamic Revival”: <http://islam.uga.edu/hunwick.html>

Midterm Exam, Friday, October 25

Week 9 (T/R, October 27/29): “Trading Worlds—Africa and the Indian Ocean System”
The Indian Ocean Trade Network; the East African World; Swahili Society; Great
Zimbabwe; Somali Society; Polynesia and Africa

Readings:

Harms, *Africa in Global History*, 147-156, 163, 251-259, 277, 280-281

The Periplus (Anonymous):

<http://web.archive.org/web/20010225123754/http://134.74.216.129/history/reader/periplus.htm>

Week 10 (T/R, November 3/5): Trading Worlds—the Mediterranean and Sahara
Africa and the Mediterranean and Trans-Sahara World Systems

Film: *Caravans of Gold*

Readings:

Harms, *Africa in Global History*, 159-162, 246-249.

Week 11 (T/R, November 10/12): Africa and the Atlantic World (c. 1440-1820 CE)

The Origins and operation of the Atlantic commerce; Demography and geography of the slave trade; Abolition

Readings:

Harms, *Africa in Global History*, 169-192, 203-206, 235-245

Anika Francis: "The Economics of the African Slave Trade" :

<http://web.archive.org/web/20000302084332/http://dolphin.upenn.edu/~vision/vis/Mar-95/5284.html>

Ayubah Suleiman Diallo, "Recalls his capture and enslavement"

<http://www.vgskole.net/prosjekt/slavrute/2.htm>

A. Falconbridge, "The treatment of newly arrived slaves in the West Indies":

<http://www.vgskole.net/prosjekt/slavrute/9.htm>

Pope Paul III: Sublimus Dei [On Slavery], 1537

http://www.newadvent.org/library/docs_pa03sd.htm

Pope Leo XIII: *Catholicae Ecclesiae* (On Slavery in The Missions), 1890.

http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_1-xiii_enc_20111890_catholicae-ecclesiae.html

Week 12 (T/R, November 17/19): Impact of the Atlantic and Asian Slave Trade

Economic and Political Impact; Africans in the new World; The Atlantic Slave Trade in Memory and Tradition

Readings:

Habtamu Tegegne, "The Edict of King Gälawdéwos Against the Illegal Slave Trade in Christians: Ethiopia, 1548 –Featured Source," *The Medieval Globe*: Vol. 2 : No. 2 (2016). Available at: <http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/tmg/vol2/iss2/5>.

Harms, *Africa in Global History*, 210-230

Week 13 (T, November 24): Political and Religious Revolutions in West Africa

The Sudan and Sahel: Jihad and Mass Islam; legacies of the jihad.

Reading:

Harms, *Africa in Global History*, 331-356, 369

November 26-29, Thanksgiving recess.

Week 14 (T/R, December 01/03): Settlers and Africans in Southern Africa

Encounter between Khoi-San and Europeans; European Expansion; The Conquest of the Xhosa' and The Zulu-British Encounter

Reading:

Harms, *Africa in Global History*, 259-265, 277, 314-317, 324, 329, 356-367, 369-370.

Week 15 (Tuesday, December 08): Review session, evaluation and valediction

Reading:

Harms, *Africa in Global History*, 295-303, 326-327

Final Exam 16 December 3:00 pm-6: 00 pm.