

**History 115: History of Africa**  
**Department of History, Moravian College**  
**Instructor: Dr. Akbar Keshodkar**  
**Fall 2014**

*Office Hours:* Tuesdays, Thursday 10:30 am – 12 pm, or by appointment

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course aims to introduce students to the diverse histories of Africa and the extent to which interaction between societies throughout Africa and other continents have shaped ancient and modern human history. The first part of the course will explore social, economic and political development in various regions of Africa before 1500 CE. The second part of the course will be devoted to examining how the experience of people throughout Africa has been transformed through their interaction with societies outside African since the 1500s and how these developments have shaped modern African societies. Through the examination of the various topics and historical developments, the course aims to further problematize and encourage students to challenge preconceived notions of race, ethnicity, tribe, gender, kinship, violence and religion often attributed to African societies.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

By the end of the course, students should have improved their ability in:

- Developing an understanding of the diverse cultural milieu throughout Africa, past and present
- Identifying major themes in African History
- Understanding the impact of levels of interaction between African societies and societies from other parts of the world
- Engaging with primary and secondary sources and explore the relationship between text and context in the writing of history
- Critically evaluating and interpreting a variety of primary sources and acquiring an awareness of the issues involved in interpreting primary sources
- Developing writing conventions appropriate to the discipline of History

**TEXT:**

Required reading:

The following book is available for purchase at the college bookstore:

Gilbert, Erik and Jonathan T. Reynolds. 2012. *Africa in World History: From Prehistory to the Present*. Boston: Pearson (ISBN: 978-0-205-05399-5)

Additional articles required for the course can be accessed through the college library electronic journal database or will be posted on blackboard.

### Supplementary Reading:

Abbink, Jon, Mirjam de Bruijn & Klaas Van Walraven (Eds). *Rethinking Resistance: Revolt and Violence in African History*. Leiden: Brill, 2003.

Falola, Toyin. *Key Events in African History: A Reference Guide*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2002.

Isichei, Elizabeth Allo. *The Religious Traditions of Africa: A History*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 2004.

McEvedy, Colin. *The Penguin Atlas of African History*. London: Penguin Books, 1995.

Parker, John and Richard Rathbone. *African History: A very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Reid, Richard. *A History of Modern Africa: 1800 to the Present*. London, Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

Shillington, Kevin (Ed). *Encyclopedia of African History*. New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2005.

### Websites:

BBC – The Story of Africa:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index.shtml>

Internet African History Sourcebook:

<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/africa/africasbook.asp>

Links to online resources for Africa:

<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/africa.htm>

African lives today:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/africanlives/front.htm>

African history archives:

<http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/30/index.html>

Annotated resource list from Africa:

[http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Home\\_Page/WWW\\_Links.html](http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Home_Page/WWW_Links.html)

Politics and Governments in Africa:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/depts/por/afbase.htm>

Africa bibliographical database:

<http://www.africabib.org/>

### **COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:**

1. *Attendance and Participation:* Students will be required to *attend* class regularly and *participate* in discussions. Questions, feedback, and student interaction are an integral part of the learning process, and will supplement lectures and films. Students should come prepared, having read the assigned materials prior to coming to class. Chronic absences, tardiness and leaving early will adversely affect your grade. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class on random days and tardiness or absences on those occasions will result in a deduction of 5 points per infraction from the class participation grade. Absences due to illness or emergencies must be communicated to the instructor prior to the class.
2. *Basic classroom rules:* While in class, students are expected to use appropriate language with the instructor as well with each other, have their cell phones on silent and not be involved in personal conversations with each other or any activities which would disrupt

the classroom environment. Infraction of these rules will result in a deduction of 20 points from the class participation grade and the student being asked to leave the classroom.

3. *Plagiarism:* I take plagiarism, copying someone else's work and representing it as your own, very seriously. This applies to all work submitted for the course. Students will be required to submitted all work done outside of the classroom on Safe Assign, through Blackboard. Plagiarism, academic dishonesty, or cheating will result in an automatic grade of F for the course. If a student's work is suspected of plagiarism, it will be their responsibility to demonstrate evidence reflecting the originality of the work, such as all notes and other materials utilized in developing the submitted work. Students should refer to the college's academic handbook for more information about plagiarism.
4. *Blackboard:* All assignments, additional reading materials, announcements and information related to the course will be posted on Blackboard. It is the students' responsibility to check Blackboard and their Moravian College email on a regular basis throughout the semester.
5. *Accommodating disabilities:* Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability must contact Ms. Elaine Mara, assistant director of academic support services for academic and disability support, at the lower level of Monocacy Hall, or by calling [610-861-1401](tel:610-861-1401). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.
6. *Quizzes/tests:* There will be two quizzes/tests on reading materials over the course of the semester. The quizzes will commence at the beginning of the class. Students should note that no makeup assessments will be offered and those arriving late will not receive extra time to complete the quizzes/tests.
7. *Document based essays:* Two document essays will be assigned over the materials covered in the class over the course of the semester. Each essay should be submitted typed, doubled spaced, in Times New Roman font, Type 12, with standard one-inch margins and with proper citations and bibliography. Students may only use academic journals and published books for acquiring materials. Under no circumstances are online sites that are not academic journals, considered acceptable for citation on papers. Students must also ensure to use correct grammar, as that will account for 10% of the grade on each paper. No late papers will be accepted.
8. *Midterm and Final Exam:* The midterm and final exam will cover material from lectures, discussions, films, and reading, consisting of objective questions (e.g. short answer questions), primary source documents and/or essay questions. Questions will be primarily based on the assigned readings and supplementary materials. Make-up exams will be given only in emergency situations, and you should contact me before the scheduled exam if possible.
9. *Explanation and Breakdown of Grades:* Grades for the class will be given with the A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F system

Attendance and Class Participation	10%
Document Based Essays (15% each)	30%
Quizzes	15%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	20%

10. *Withdrawals/Incompletes*: Under no circumstances will a student receive an academic incomplete if they are failing the course or if they have done little or no work. In circumstances that an Incomplete is given, it will be the responsibility of the student to ensure that the work is submitted on time and meets the requirements of the course. If work is not submitted by the deadline given, the student will automatically receive an “F”.

## COURSE OUTLINE/SCHEDULE

The course will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays, 8:55 am – 10:05 am. Students are required to come prepared for each class, having completed the reading assignments beforehand. Unless indicated, all the required readings listed below are from Gilbert and Reynolds (GR). Other required reading materials will be posted on Blackboard and can also be accessed through the college library's electronic Journal collection (BB).

### Week 1:

25 Aug 2014

Introduction to the course  
Documentary (to be watched outside class): *Africa: A History Denied*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z08CP9UJskk&noredirect=1>

27 Aug 2014

Ch. 1 – Physical context of African History (GR, p. 1-12)  
Ch. 2 – Africa and Human Origins (GR, p. 14-24)  
Controversies in African History: Race and Human Origins (GR, p. 23-24)

### Week 2:

1 Sept 2014

Ch. 4 – Settled Life (GR, p. 40-66)  
Controversies in African History: African Food Crops in the Non-African World (GR, p. 48-49)

3 Sept 2014

Ch. 5 – North and Northeast Africa in Early World History (GR, p. 67-84)  
Voices in African History: Be a Scribe (GR, p. 72-73)  
Herodotus, *The Histories*, c. 430 BCE, Book III. (BB)  
Procopius of Caesarea: *History of the Wars*, c. 550 CE. Book I.xix.1, 17-22, 27-37, xx.1-13 (BB)

### Week 3:

8 Sept 2014

**Quiz on materials from week 1 and 2**  
Ch. 6 – Africa and Early Christian World (GR, p. 85-97)

10 Sept 2014

Voices in African History: The Kebra Negast (GR, p. 90-91)  
*The Christianization of Nubia* (BB)

### Week 4:

15 Sept 2014

Ch. 7 – North and West Africa and the Spread of Islam (GR, p. 98-119)  
Leo Africanus: Description of Timbuktu, from *The Description of Africa* (1526) (BB)  
Ibn Battuta on Women and Matriliney in West Africa (GR, p. 113)

17 Sept 2014

Ch. 8 – East Africa and Advent of Islam (GR, p. 120-138)  
*Ibn Battuta: Travels in Asia and Africa 1325-1354* (BB – from “Ibn Battuta arrive in Aden” to “The People of Dhofar and their customs”)

### Week 5:

22 Sept 2014

Ch. 9 – Slavery and the Creation of the Atlantic World (GR, p. 143-174)

24 Sept 2014            **Document essay 1 Due at beginning of class**  
Equiano's Description of the Middle Passage (GR, p. 160)  
Thomas Phillips, "A journal of a voyage made in the Hannibal of London, 1694" (BB)

Week 6:

29 Sept 2014            Ch. 10 – West and West Central Africa, 1500-1800 (GR, p. 175-198)

1 Oct 2014              An Account of the Slave Trade in Africa (GR, p. 185-186)  
John Barbot, "Narratives of the African Slave Trade, 1682" (BB)

Week 7:

6 Oct 2014              Review for Midterm Exam

8 Oct 2014              **Midterm Exam**

Week 8:

13 Oct 2014:            NO CLASS (Fall Recess)

15 Oct 2014:            Ch. 11 – North Africa and the Soudan, 1500-1800 (GR, p. 199-218)

Week 9:

20 Oct 2014            Ch. 12 – East Africa, 1500-1850 (GR, p. 219-240)

22 Oct 2014            A French Slaver in East Africa: Captain Dallons (GR, p. 230)  
Vasco Da Gama, "Round Africa to India" (BB)

Week 10:

27 Oct 2014            Ch. 13 – Southern Africa, 1500-1870 (GR, p. 241-261)

29 Oct 2014

**Quiz on Ch. 11-13**

Cultural Contact in Southern Africa: Journal, Jan van Riebeeck (BB)

Letters of Johanna Maria van Riebeeck (BB)

Letters of Will, Laurens Verbrugge and Beletje Frederikszoon (BB)

Anthony Trollope: The Diamond Fields of South Africa, 1870 (BB)

Week 11:

3 Nov 2014            Ch. 14 – Colonialism and African Resistance, (GR, p. 262-285)

Rudyard Kipling, The White Man's Burden, 1899 (BB)

Documentary: Excerpts from Out of Africa

Documentary (to be watched outside class): *Guns, Germs and Steel: Into the Africa* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRLXH8EE5bA>)

5 Nov 2014

Ch. 16 – Political Change in the Time of Colonialism (GR, p. 314-338)  
The ANNC Protests the Land Act of 1913 (GR, p. 334-335)

Documentary: People's century – Colonialism and anti-colonial movements in Africa

Week 12:

10 Nov 2014

Ch. 15 – Economic Change in Modern Africa (GR, p. 286-313)

12 Nov 2014

John Hobson, "The Commercial Value of Imperialism" (BB)

John Hobson, "The Political Significance of Imperialism" (BB)

Week 13:

17 Nov 2014

**Document based essay 2 due at beginning of class**

Ch. 18 – Politics in the Era of Decolonization and Independence (GR, p. 360-387)

Documentary: People's Century – African Independence

19 Nov 2014

Nnamdi Azikiwe on Imperialism (GR, p. 364-365)

Kwame Nkrumah, "I Speak of Freedom," 1961 (BB)

Desmond Tutu, "The Question of South Africa," 1984 (BB)

Documentary: People's Century - Apartheid

Week 14:

24 Nov 2014

Ch. 17 – African Culture in the Modern World (GR, p. 339-359)

The Arusha Declaration, 1967 (BB)

Siti binti Saad, "The Voice of Taarab (GR, 354-355)

26 Nov 2014:

NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)

Week 15:

1 Dec 2014

Ch. 19 – Contemporary Africa (GR, p. 388-415)

Popular culture and political commentary (GR, 404-405)

Photo Essay: Envisioning Africa (Insert, p. 134-135)

3 Dec 2014

Review for Final Exam

**FINAL EXAM:**

**Tuesday, 9 December 2014, 8:30 am**