HISTORY OF WEST AFRICA
His 443
Fall - 1991

Tues/Thurs. 8:00-9:15
1221 Humanities
Office hours: Tues. 10-11
Thurs. 2-3
and by appointment

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263-1800

4 CREDITS or 3 CREDITS?

If you take the course for 4 credits you will write a 10-15 page term paper due December 5 - NO EXCEPTIONS. Any paper received after the due date will be significantly penalized in grade. The topic of the paper must be approved by the instructor. If you elect this option your topic must be set by October 3. On that day you will hand in a typed sheet with your paper topic and a one paragraph discussion of what you hope to do. Graduate students will submit a 20-25 page term paper of expected higher quality.

This course deals with the history of West Africa from the first millennium to the period of political independence in the 1960s. Some of the major topics covered in the course are: an introduction to West African peoples, social systems, and geography; archaeology and its findings; the influence of Islam; trans-Saharan and Atlantic trading systems; West African empires and the effects of these empires on the peoples outside of those polities; the West European impact on Africa prior to political partition; the Atlantic slave trade and its abolition; West African Islamic jihads; political partition by European powers; the colonial period; African organization toward independence; problems facing West Africa today.

Required texts


Sembene Ousmane. God's Bits of Wood. Heinemann, 1986. (Any edition of this work is acceptable.)

Outline map of Northern Africa.


Course requirements: 1. Map Quiz, September 24: 50 points
2. 5-7 page typed paper on the effects of the environment on West African peoples and their history - due October 17: 100 points.

3. 5-7 page typed paper on the effects of and resistance to colonialism in French territories using God's Bits of Wood to illustrate some of your points - due December 3: 150 points.

4. Final Map Quiz, December 5: 75 points

5. Take-home final (two comprehensive essay questions), distributed December 12 - due December 21 by 9:00 a.m.: 200 points

6. In-class final (identifications and short answer only) 100 points

Total points for 3-credit students: 675
To receive a grade of A you must receive 628 total points
" A/B " 587 total points
" B " 560 total points
" B/C " 520 total points
" C " 472 total points
" D " 405 total points

Below 405 points receives a grade of F

Total points for 4-credit students: 875
To receive a grade of A you must receive 814 total points
" A/B " 761 total points
" B " 726 total points
" B/C " 674 total points
" C " 613 total points
" D " 525 total points

Below 525 points receives a grade of F

Map work: You are to study the following list, locating the ethnic groups, place names, and geographical features. Use the Atlas placed on reserve. For the map quiz on September 24 I will select 25 terms. You will place the corresponding number for each of the terms on a blank map purchased at the bookstore. The outline maps can be purchased in the supplies section of the bookstore at a kiosk located in the center of the store. It is suggested that you purchase an extra map to use as a study sheet. For the final map quiz on December 5 a second list will be passed out one to two weeks before for you to study. It will incorporate the following list and include other map terms taken from lectures.

Senegal River
Niger River
Volta River
Gambia River
Benue River
Cross River
Bandama River
Bani River
Futa Jalon
Awdaghust
Miani
Begho
Bobo Dioulasso
Wolof ethnic group
Baule ethnic group
Hausa ethnic group
Modern Countries
Mauritania
Senegal
Gambia
Guinea-Bissau
Guinea-Conakry
Sierra Leone
Liberia
Côte d'Ivoire
Sahara
Gulf of Guinea
Cape Verde Islands
Bambuk goldfields
Boure goldfields
Jenne
Timbuktu
Kano
Katsina

Akan language group
Yoruba ethnic group
Ibo ethnic group
Elmina
Benin (ancient kingdom)
Segu
Kong
Gao

Mali
Burkina Faso
Ghana
Togo
Benin
Niger
Nigeria

Paper assignments: The two paper assignments and the final exam are to be typed, double-spaced, proof-read, with 1" margins. You must fit your paper within the page length specified and must write at least as much as indicated by the page length specified. No exceptions. Those papers which are too long or too short will have points deducted automatically. These are not arbitrary page lengths, but fit the questions asked at the level of this class. You are to write the papers using class materials—lectures, novels, readings. No outside research is required for either of the papers or the exam. Think about the material and organize your essays.

Readings: Readings below are an integral part of the course. Readings not found in the required texts listed above are on reserve in the College Library Reserve reading room. The recent copyright decision by the Supreme Court has made it difficult to issue course packets through Kinko's. If you desire xerox copies of these materials you will have to make them yourselves. You might try to do this in the first two weeks of the course when class will not be meeting.

Lecture Topics & Reading Assignments

I. September 3 and 4
Introduction to the course. Environment and peoples of West Africa.


II. September 10
The Religion of Islam

Topics in West African History, pp. 11-16.
September 12
Trans-saharan trade

Topics in West African History, pp. 1-10


III. September 17 and 19
Ancient Ghana and Mali

Topics in West African History, pp. 17-31

1. Said Hamdun and Noel King, Ibn Battuta, in Black Africa, pp. 1-11, 22-62, 68-81. Pages 68-81 are the notes for pages 22-62. They are important, so read them as you go along. (DT351 I3513)

IV. September 24 and 26
Early peoples of Senegambia, Benin, Sierra Leone and Hausaland. Map Quiz, September 24.

Topics in West African History, pp. 74-82, 55-101


V. October 1 and 3
Mande diaspora. Songhay.

Topics in West African History, pp. 33-43

1. Harold Courlander, The Heart of the Ngoni, pp. 1-43. (GR350.32 B3 H47)
2. David Dalby, "Distribution and Nomenclature of the Manding People and their Language," pp. 1-13 in Papers on the Manding. (DT474.5 P36)

VI. October 8 and 10
European arrival and impact on forest and coastal states.

Topics in West African History, pp. 54-top of 60; 88-94; and 102-106.

VII. October 15 and 17
Atlantic slave trade and its effects. First paper due October 17.

*Topics in West African History*, pp. 107-110.

VIII. October 22
Islamic society in Sudanic West Africa


IX. October 28
Euroafrican society in Coastal West Africa.


IX. October 29
Fulbe people of West Africa and early jihads.


October 31 - Mid-term Exam.

X. November 5 and 7.
Western Sudan in the 19th century: jihads and slave trade

*West Africa since 1800*, Webster and Boahen, Chapters 1-5.

XI. November 12 and 14
Coastal states in the 19th century. Abolition of the slave trade.

*West Africa since 1900*, Chapters 6-12.
*Topics in West African History*, pp. 111-16.

XII. November 19 and 21
European advance; conquest and partition.

*Topics in West African History*, pp. 117-22.
*West Africa since 1800*, Chapter 13-16.
Begin reading Sembene Ousmane, *God's Bits of Wood*. Start with the following article by Suret-Canale for background.


XIII. November 26
Colonial government.


XIV. December 3 and 5
Colonial economy.
Webster and Boahen, Chapters 17-21.


XV. December 10 and 12
Independence movements and decolonization. Take-home final distributed December 10
Webster and Boahen, Chapters 22-25.