

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
Department of History
Semester I, 1979-80

History 376

History of Africa to 1880

Mr. Vansina

GENERAL: Readings should be done in the week before classes, except for the first week. Required textbooks are available at the U. Bookstore and on reserve. Graduate students are expected to do more than the required reading; undergraduates are not.

Exams: Six week's: Tuesday, October 9; written. (one essay question, identifications) 40%
Twelve week: November 19; hand in paper 50
Final: essay questions (see date time table) 30%

Each student will check with the instructor about a topic for a paper or the keeping of a class diary.

EXPLANATION OF OUTLINE:

The history of Africa is the history of societies and cultures very different from what you are accustomed to. Very little can be taken for granted. Hence the necessity to insist on those features which have great consistency over long periods of time; "the long term". The second part of the course deals with some major trends. An effort has been made to visualize aspects of African "ways of life" by the use of slides. These are to be taken seriously. In addition students without African experience are advised to look at some picture books by themselves. All students should also consult one of the Atlases. None of the historical atlases is really satisfactory (e.g. J. FAGE) so none has been assigned.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

CURTIN, FEIERMAN, THOMPSON, VANSINA, African History (Little Brown) 1977 (pap).
BOHANNAN, P. CURTIN, P., Africa and the Africans (AM. Museum Science Books) (pap) 1971.
MAIR, Lucy, African Kingdoms (Oxford) 1978.
NIANE, D.P., Sundiata: an epic of old Mali (Longmans) (pap) 1966.
GIBB, Mohammedanism, (pap)
MOFOLO, T., Shaka (Int.Af.Inst) (pap) 1931 (reprints).

OUTLINE:

PART ONE: In the Long Haul

Week 1: Sep. 4: Geography
Sep. 6: History and Africa
Reading: British Encyclopaedia: "Africa": maps and geography.
1974 edition (Reference).

Week 2: The Roots of African Cultures
Sep. 11: Stone, agriculture
Sep. 13: The Iron Age
Reading: CURTIN, (et al): p. 1-37. BOHANNAN, (et al): p. 1-76.

Week 3: Iron Age economics
Sep. 18: Production and surplus
Sep. 20: Mobility and stability
Reading: BOHANNAN (et al), 79-187

- Week 4: Societies
 Sep. 25: Kinship groups
 Sep. 27: Political formations other than states
 Reading: CURTIN (et al), 117-179
- Week 5: States
 Oct. 2: State as process
 Oct. 4: State as "social formation"
 Reading: L. MAIR, all.
- Week 6: An African sense of history and life
 Oct. 9: Exam
 Oct. 11: The oral ways and ways of the book.
 Reading: NEANE, all.
- Week 7: Islam in Africa
 Oct. 16: Islam
 Oct. 18: Islam's spread in Africa
 Reading: GIBB, all. (92 p.)
- PART TWO: Trends
- Week 8: North and West Africa to 1500
 Oct. 23: North Africa from the conquest by Islam to 1500.
 Oct. 25: West Africa from the Empires to the Fall of Songhay
 Reading: CURTIN (et al), 66-116
- Week 9: Africa before the Caravels
 Oct. 30: The East African coast
 Nov. 1: Inner Africa
 Reading: Review CURTIN (et al), 117-179
- Week 10: The Slavetrade
 Nov. 6: Rise and Fall of the Trade
 Nov. 8: Economics and Institutions
 Reading: CURTIN (et al), 213-248
- Week 11: Ottomans, Europeans, Africans
 Nov. 13: The Ottoman Empire
 Nov. 15: Early European Settlements and Forts
 Reading: CURTIN (et al), 277-309, 189-212
- Week 12: PAPERS DUE BY NOV. 20
 Holy war and Holy trade in West Africa
 Nov. 20: The Muslim reform movements (Jihads)
 Reading: CURTIN (et al), 332-390.
- Week 13: Central Africa
 Nov. 27: Central Africa to c. 1800
 Nov. 29: A Commercial Revolution: 1800-1880
 Reading: CURTIN (et al), 249-276 and 419-443

Week 14: East Africa

Dec. 4: Before the Sultanate of Zanzibar

Dec. 6: Zanzibar and its Trade

Reading: CURTIN (et al), 391-418

Week 15: South Africa

Dec. 11: A Great Convulsion: The Era of Shaka

Dec. 13: A Great Convulsion: The Boer Trek

Reading: CURTIN (et al), 204-331

MOFOLO, Shaka (all). Note: This is an historical romance, a masterpiece in African literature and a masterful portrait of Shaka.