

University of Wisconsin-Madison

History of Africa since 1870

Major historic and current problems in African life, as seen by Africans.

History 105—Fall Semester, 2022 - 3 Credits



Fabrice Monteiro, Untitled #11, 2016. A representation of Ogun, the Nigerian god of iron—draped in technological waste. The fiery mass wielded by Ogun refers to a method for burning away plastic insulation from copper wires. The process, often performed by youths, produces highly toxic smoke.

Dr. Paul Glen Grant—pgrant@wisc.edu; office hours (5269 Humanities): Mondays, 9-11 and by appointment.

Course meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30-10:45, 1217 Humanities Building.

Course page: <https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/314922>

The sheer diversity of Africa demands global competencies and cross-cultural skills from those who study its past. As a survey of the last 150 years in Africa, this course equips students for professional success in the global marketplace.

Students cultivate several academic approaches to Africa's recent past, privileging African voices and ideas, especially in religion and literature—realms of life in which Africans have enjoyed greatest success in asserting life their own way.

1. COURSE FORMAT

Instructional Modality

This is an in-person course: two seventy-five-minute meetings per week.

Credit Hours:

This class meets for two, 75-minute class periods each week over the fall semester and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, etc.) for about 3 hours out of the classroom for every class period. This document includes more information about meeting times and expectations for student work.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Define important historical questions. Evaluate the evidentiary and theoretical bases of pertinent historical conversations in order to highlight opportunities for further investigation.
2. Analyze evidence. Examine the context in which sources were created, search for chronological and other relationships among them, and assess the sources in light of that knowledge.
3. Present original conclusions. Present original and coherent findings through clearly written, persuasive arguments and narratives.
4. Connect history and career. Processing questions about the past in career-focused affinity groups.

Required readings:

Textbook [ebook acceptable]:

Richard J. Reid, *A History of Modern Africa, 1800 to the Present* (third edition) (Wiley-Blackwell, 2019)

Core readings:

Chinua Achebe, *No Longer at Ease* (Penguin, 2011)

Nnedi Okorafor, *Binti* (Tor Books, 2015)

Ferdinand Oyono, *Houseboy* (Waveland Press, 1966)

Ousmane Sembène, *God's Bits of Wood* (Longman, 2007)

David M. Gordon, *Apartheid in South Africa: A Brief History with Documents* (Macmillan, 2017)

Also, the following will be provided free of charge—do not purchase!

Clint Smith, *How the Word is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America* (Little, Brown, & Co., 2021)

Workshop readings (some are actually videos) and other short readings: see Canvas. These are marked below with an *asterisk.

Assignments:

African Intellectual History Workshops:

Most weeks include an in-depth discussion of one or more artifacts of African thought (these vary from traditional proverbs to music videos and science fiction). At its conclusion, I will direct you in a written response. In most cases, I will assign a nominal score in Canvas.

Primary Source Analyses:

Most weeks will include original historical documents which we will discuss in class. At three points you will write on these in the format of an open-book quiz in Canvas. Each will be open for a week; feel free to work with others (please name your collaborators), but you will be scored on your own.

Each quiz consists of a number of critical short essay questions on the assigned readings. The questions will be open-book, and you can re-take them as you like.

Caution: Canvas is not always reliable. You are advised to write your answers elsewhere (such as in Microsoft OneDrive), only entering them into Canvas when ready to submit.

Essays:

You will write short (around 750 word) essays, with the same prompt, on three different young thinkers on social commentaries inside fiction, each written around 1960.

The prompt: *As author X looked ahead to independence from colonialism, what role did they think traditional wisdom ought to play in the structuring of society and government?*

Group work is permissible but must be indicated (because I check your work against plagiarism trackers)—each of you will submit your own essay and be graded as individuals.

Reading Logs:

You will keep a running log of your reading notes, including page references. At four points in the semester, you will submit your log as it currently stands. (This forces you to keep track of your thoughts, and it helps me know how you are understanding the material!)

Journals and Lecture Responses:

Several times during the semester, you will write short responses. In most cases, there is no right answer, but the exercise will help you connect between your future careers and the historical material.

Critical Historical Thinking:

This is the closest this course comes to tests. Twice during the semester you will answer a set of open-book questions on the Richard Reid textbook, and during the finals week, you will have an in-class exercise.

Honors:

Program students may take this course for Honors Optional credit. Students should [add or drop the Honors Option](#) by following the steps outlined on the Honors Program website. To earn Honors credit in this course, students will be required to develop, in conversation with Dr. Grant, special competence in one country or theme, including a plan for ongoing research at UW-Madison.

In most cases, this will take the form of a ten-page paper on the chosen country, identifying concrete action steps (language learning, courses in history or other departments, etc.) and key scholarly concerns the that

Prospective honors students must schedule an in-person appointment with Grant during the first two weeks of class.

2. GRADES

Grades are assigned on the basis of accumulation of points over the course of the semester (up to 100; see below). In theory, each student could get an A (or could fail). You accumulate points in three ways: participation, quizzes, and essays.

Due dates and point values

Drop boxes and quizzes close at 11:59 PM on the dates indicated:

African Intellectual History Workshops (12 points total):

Ghanaian Proverbs (due 9/19):	2 points
Okun Asare, “Sheep and the Shining Stone” (due 10/03):	2 points
Sayyid Qutb, “The Religion of the Future (due 10/17):	2 points
Biafran War documents (due 10/31):	2 points
Nollywood Gospel Music Videos (due 11/28):	2 points
Nnedi Okorafor, <i>Binti</i> (due 12/14):	2 points

Comparative Source Analyses (24 points total):

Colonialism and Resistance (open 10/17-24):	8 points
Apartheid in South Africa (open 11/14-21):	8 points
World Religions in Nigeria (open 12/5-12)	8 points

Essays (24 points total):

Ferdinand Oyono essay (due 10/03):	8 points
Chinua Achebe essay (due 11/07):	8 points
Ousmane Sembène essay (due 12/05):	8 points

Reading Logs (12 points total):

Log 1 (due 9/26):	3 points
Log 2 (due 10/17):	3 points
Log 3 (due 11/14):	3 points
Log 4 (due 12/12):	3 points

Journals and Lecture Responses (8 points total):

Journal 1 (due 9/12):	1 point
Journal 2 (due 9/19):	1 point
Journal 3 (due 10/17):	1 point
Journal 4 (due 11/8):	1 point
Clint Smith Lecture Response (due 11/8):	2 points
Journal 5 (due 11/28):	1 point
Journal 6 (due 12/14):	1 point

Critical Historical Thinking (20 points total):

Engaging Richard Reid 1 (open 10/3-10):	4 points
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Engaging Richard Reid 2 (open 11/7-14): 4 points

Final Exam (12/17, 2:45-4:45 PM): 8 points

SUB TOTAL: 96 points

Participation:

The quality of this course depends on the group chemistry we create together! A significant part of the learning comes as students converse and hear from one another. As an incentive, I will assign four points for your participation.

4 points

TOTAL: 100 points

Grading scale:

0-59 = F; 60-69 = D; 70-76 = C; 77-82 = BC; 83-86 = B; 87-92 = AB; 93-100 = A

Grading complaints

I entertain grading complaints, but I require live discussion (including by video conference). If you wish for me to reconsider a grade, you must: 1) Submit a formal request to me (by email), and 2) come to discuss the issue in person, justifying your complaint substantially (as in: explaining your answer/argument). I can be quite generous, but this formality is part of your learning experience.

3. POLICIES and RULES:

PRIVACY OF STUDENT RECORDS and the USAGE of AUDIO RECORDED LECTURES

Lecture materials and recordings for History 105 are protected intellectual property at UW-Madison. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or have lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

COURSE EVALUATIONS

Students will be provided with an opportunity to evaluate this course and your learning experience. Student participation is an integral component of this course, and your feedback is important to me. I strongly encourage you to participate in the course evaluation.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR & RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

You have my (Paul Grant's) full support to develop your religious lives while in this course. I was once a student myself! So please communicate with me for accommodations, if needed.

Because this course operates on a week-by-week basis, most assignments are available well in advance of the due date: extensions are entirely possible—but *you must ask first!*

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary action include, but is not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES STATEMENT

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. (See: [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#))

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION STATEMENT

[Diversity](#) is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves

to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

4. COURSE OUTLINE:

Week One (Sept. 8-11): You are Welcome Here!

Thursday: Course introductions

Readings (due by beginning of next week):

*Ghanaian Proverbs

Reid, pages 8-16 and chapter 4 (Southern Frontiers)

Submissions:

- Journal 1 – What I Already Know about Africa

Week Two (Sept. 12-18): The Background

Tuesday:

- 1000 Years: Africa, 870-1870
- Introducing *Houseboy*
- Workshop: Proverbs

Thursday:

- Africa in the year 1870
- Affinity Groups and Scavenger Hunt

Readings due by 9/19:

- Ferdinand Oyono, *Houseboy* (first half)
- Reid, chapter 8 (The Compass and the Cross)

Submissions:

- Journal #2 – Academic skills I lost during Covid
- Intellectual History Analysis: Proverbs

Week Three (Sept. 19-25): The Scramble

Tuesday:

- Industrial revolutions, capitalism, and urbanization
- Discussing *Houseboy*
- The Story of David Kwasi Badu Cornelius

Thursday:

- Europe's Scramble for Africa
- Discussing *Houseboy*
- The Story of David Kwasi Badu Cornelius (cont.)

Readings due by 9/26:

- Ferdinand Oyono, *Houseboy* (second half)
- Reid, chapter 9 (Whatever Happens)
- Gordon, documents 1-4

Submissions:

- Reading Log #1

Week Four (Sept. 26-Oct. 2): No Longer At Ease

Note: The Jewish holiday Rosh Hashanah ends on 9/27. Email me (pgrant@wisc.edu) if you need anything from me!

Tuesday:

- Foreign Rule
- Introducing Chinua Achebe and *No Longer At Ease*

Thursday:

- Settler Colonialism

Readings due by 10/03:

- Reid, chapter 11 (Pax Colonia)
- Chinua Achebe, *No Longer at Ease*, (first quarter)
- *Okun Asare, "The Story of Sheep and Python"
- *Karen Blixen, *Out of Africa* (excerpt)

Submissions:

- Ferdinand Oyono Essay
- Intellectual History Analysis: Sheep and Python

Week Five (Oct. 3-9): Triangulating Europe

Tuesday:

- Cocoa and Coffee
- Discussing *No Longer At Ease*

Thursday:

- World War One
- Senegalese WWI voices

Readings due by 10/10:

- Chinua Achebe, *No Longer at Ease*, (second quarter)
- Reid, chapter 12 (Hard Times) and 14 (The Beached Whale)

Submissions:

- Engaging Richard Reid 1

Week Six (Oct. 10-16): Decolonizing the Mind

Tuesday:

- Erecting Apartheid
- Discussing *No Longer At Ease*

Thursday:

- Sayyid Qutb: A Muslim Response to the Cold War
- Discussing *No Longer At Ease*

Readings due by 10/17:

- Reid, chapter 15 (Conceiving and Producing Nations)
- Chinua Achebe, *No Longer at Ease*, (third quarter)
- Gordon, documents 13-19
- *Sayyid Qutb: *Islam: The Religion of the Future* (excerpts)

Submissions:

- Journal #3
- Intellectual History Analysis: Sayyid Qutb
- Reading Log #2

Week Seven (Oct. 17-23): Imagined Communities

Tuesday:

- Nationalism
- Workshop: Kwame Nkrumah, *I Speak of Freedom* (excerpts)
- Discussing *No Longer At Ease*

Thursday:

- Independence

Readings due by 10/23:

- Reid, chapter 16 (Compromising Conflict)
- Chinua Achebe, *No Longer at Ease*, (fourth quarter)
- *Kwame Nkrumah, *I Speak of Freedom* (excerpts)

Submissions:

- Comparative Source Analysis: Colonialism

Week Eight (Oct. 24-30): God's Bits of Wood

Tuesday:

- Successes and Disappointments
- Introducing *God's Bits of Wood*

Thursday:

- Congo and Biafra
- Workshop: Biafra documents

Readings due by 10/31:

- Reid, chapter 17 (Unsafe Foundations)
- Ousmane Sembène, *God's Bits of Wood*, 1-34 (chapters "Ad'jibidji" through "Maïmouna")
- Clint Smith, *How the Word is Passed*, (Gorée Island chapter only)

Submissions:

- Intellectual History Analysis: Biafra documents

Week Nine (Oct. 31-Nov. 6): Late Cold War

Tuesday:

- Armed Resistance in ZA
- Discussing Clint Smith
- Discussing *God's Bits of Wood*

SPECIAL: Clint Smith lecture, Tuesday 7 p.m., Memorial Union

Thursday:

- Angola and Ethiopia
- Thomas Sankara

Readings due by 11/07:

- Reid, chapter 18 (Violence and the Militarization of Political Culture)
- Ousmane Sembène, *God's Bits of Wood*, 35-77 (chapters “Daouda-Beaugosse” through “Ramatoulaye”)
- Gordon, documents 20-27 and 33-35
- *Thomas Sankara speech

Submissions:

- Journal #4
- Chinua Achebe essay
- Clint Smith Lecture response

Week Ten (Nov. 7-13): Truth and Reconciliation

Tuesday:

- The Turn in South Africa
- Discussing *God's Bits of Wood*

Thursday:

- Truth and Reconciliation

Readings due by 11/14:

- Reid, chapter 19 (Rectification, Redemption, and Reality)
- Ousmane Sembène, *God's Bits of Wood*, 78-127 (chapters “Thiémoko” through “Mame Sofi”)
- Gordon, p. 20-23 and documents 46-50

Submissions:

- Engaging Richard Reid 2
- Reading Log #3

Week Eleven (Nov. 14-20): Spiritual Fire

Tuesday:

- Pentecostalism
- Grace Iwhere and Olusegun Obasanjo
- Discussing *God's Bits of Wood*

Thursday:

- Religious Warfare in Northern Nigeria
- Rejecting Separation of Religion and State
- Discussing *God's Bits of Wood*

Readings due before next week:

- Ousmane Sembène, *God's Bits of Wood*, 128-163 (chapters "Sounkaré" through "The Apprentices")
- *Grace Iwhere, "My Initiation into the Water Spirit World"
- *Aliyu Dawda, "The Falsity of Secularism"

Submissions:

- Comparative Source Analysis #2: Apartheid

Weeks Twelve-Thirteen (Nov. 21-Dec. 4): Growing in Confidence

Note: this double week includes Thanksgiving recess.

Tuesday, 11/22:

- Oil and Mining
- Discussing *God's Bits of Wood*

Thursday, 11/24:

- no class (Thanksgiving Recess)

Tuesday, 11/29:

- World Cup Viewing, location to be announced (Ecuador-Senegal, match begins at 9:00)

Thursday, 12/01:

- Africa Reclaims its Art
- Workshop: Nollywood Gospel Music

Readings due by 11/28:

- Ousmane Sembène, *God's Bits of Wood*, 164-204 (chapters “The Vatican” through “The March of the Women”)

Readings due by 12/5:

- Ousmane Sembène, *God's Bits of Wood*, 205-end (chapters “The Meeting” through “Epilogue”)
- Begin Nnedi Okorafor, *Binti*

Submissions due by 11/28:

- Journal #5

Submissions due by 12/5:

- Ousmane Sembène essay
- Nollywood Gospel Music response

Weeks Fourteen-Fifteen (Dec. 5-13): New Opportunities, New Threats

Tuesday, 12/06:

- China and Africa
- Dividends of Peace

Thursday, 12/08:

- Sahel Conflicts
- Migration
- Discuss *Binti*

Readings due by 12/06:

- Finish Nnedi Okorafor, *Binti*

Submissions:

- Comparative Source Analysis: World Religions in Nigeria
- Reading Log #4

Tuesday, Dec. 13:

- Africa and the Rest of Your Lives
- Discuss *Binti*
- Discuss Final

No Readings due

Submissions:

- Intellectual History Analysis: *Binti*

Exam Week

Exam: Dec 17, 2022 from 2:45 PM - 4:45 PM, location to be announced.