

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
Department of History
Semester II, 1989-90

History 376

HISTORY OF AFRICA TO 1800

J. Vansina

GENERAL: Readings: Reading assignments should be completed before the lectures where they are cited.

Credits: 4 credits with midterm paper; 3 credits with midterm exam

Examinations:

6 weeks for undergrads: identifications + one essay question (20%)

12 weeks: written (essay questions, take home) or paper or log (40%)

"log" refers to a journal about the course in which are noted reflections about lectures and readings (comparing them) and personal thoughts about the issues discussed.

Final: essay questions (40%)

TEXTS: Required texts at bookshop (Univ.) and reserve
The UNESCO general history of Africa, vol. 3 (ed. M. el Fasi) and
vol. 4 (ed. T. Niane). Abbreviated U3 and U4

G. Connah, African Civilizations, Cambridge 1987. Abbreviated C.

Recommended

P. Curtin and others, African History 1978

M.D. McLeod, Asante, London 1981

The reading by G. Connah is easier than the readings from UNESCO.

These are at the level of first year university for students in Africa.
Connah and the lectures will orient you in their reading.

Other: Consult J.F.A. Ajayi, M. Crowder, Historical Atlas of Africa,
London, 1985 where necessary and study maps in the readings.

SYLLABUS

I. BEFORE 1500 A.D.

Week 1: M. Introductory
W. "Roots"
F. The "oikoumene"

Reading

"Africa" entry in Macropaedia of the Encyclopaedia Britannica.
see reference section in all libraries.

Week 2: M. Islam
W. Spread of Islam
F. Discussion - slides

Reading

U3: 31-118 (Chapters 2, 3, 4).

Week 3: M. Transsaharan trade
W. Developments in North Africa
F. discussion

Reading

U3: 336-435 (chapters 13, 14).

Recommended: U3: 276-313 (Lewicki)

Week 4: M. West Africa before Islam: urbanization.
W. Manding
F. Slides: Art in southwest Nigeria

Reading

C.: 97-149
R., S., McIntosh, "Finding West Africa's oldest city", National Geographic Magazine, Sept. 1982, vol. 162, 3: 396-415
U4: 117-171
U4: 187-210
Recommended: U4: 339-370

Week 5: M. the Fatimid empire
W. Mamluk Feudalism
F. discussion

Reading

U3: 314-335
U4: 371-397

Week 6: M. Christian Nubia
W. Christian Ethiopia
F. Six week exam

Reading

U3: 194-223
U4: 398-454 (Chapters 16 & 17)
C. 67-96
Recommended: C, 24-66

Week 7: M. Bantu expansion
W. Societies in the rain forests and southern savannas
F. Discussion

Reading

U3: 140-162, 643-663.
U4: 551-577.

Week 8: M. Pastoralists of East Africa
W. Kingdoms of the great lakes
F. discussion

Reading

U4: 498-524
C: 223-226

Week 9: M. Swahili cities
W. The copperbelt
F. Discussion

Reading

U3: 586-615
U4: 455-480
C: 150-182, 217-222

Week 10: M. Zimbabwe
W. Namibia-Botswana
F. Discussion

Reading

U3: 664-680

U4: 525-550, 578-596

C: 183-213

Recommended: The Reader's Digest History of South Africa: 20-31

II. 1500-1800 A.D. INTERACTION WITH EUROPEANS

Week 11: M. The slave trade
W. Its organization and impact
F. Discussion

Reading

J.D. Fage, A History of Africa, 244-288

N. Klein, "The Portuguese Slave Trade from Angola in the 18th century" Journal of Economic History, vol. 32, 1972: 894-918

U4: 635-672.

Recommended: Curtin: 213-247

Week 12: M. Holy Wars in West Africa
W. Asante and the Guinea Coast
F. Discussion

Reading

Curtin: 180-211

McLeod: Asante: 9-71, 178-182

Recommended: McLeod: 72-177

Week 13: M. Kongo and Christianity
W. The slave trade and slave trading states
F. Art of Central Africa (slides)

Reading

D. Birmingham, P. Martin, History of Central Africa, 1983, vol.1, 118-151

Curtin: 249-276

Week 14: M. South of the Zambezi
W. Europeans at the Cape
F. Discussion

Reading

D. Birmingham, P. Martin: 205-234 para 1; 245-268 para 1.

Reader's Digest: 32-75

Curtin: 277-303.

Week 15: M. Inner Dynamics of African Societies and Cultures
W. The Interaction of Outsiders
F. The future of African History before 1800.

Reading

U3: 750-793.