Ruramisai Charumbira
The University of Texas at Austin – Fall 2012
HIST 317N/AFR 317C – The Civilizations of Africa to 1800[1]
UTC 3.110, Monday & Wednesday, 3:30-5:00pm

Course Description and Objectives

Samukele, Mauya, Karibu, Welcome! Is Timbuktu a real place? Is ancient Egypt part of Africa? These and other – everyday and not so everyday – questions will be the subjects of our course on the *Civilizations of Africa to 1800*. **The major objective of the course is to introduce students to the History of early African societies that not only shaped the continent's history but also human history**. Due to the vastness of the continent, time period, and cultures under study, we will not cover everything in the course of a semester – or, for that matter, an academic year! Rather, the course focuses on particular themes and case studies important for understanding **change over time in the political, social, economic, and cultural history of the African continent**. The course's second objective is to facilitate students' understanding of world history holistically, with Africa in its proper context over time. To get the most out of this survey course, students are strongly encouraged to keep up with their readings and assignments.

Required Texts:

- Christopher Ehret, *The Civilizations of Africa: A History to 1880*
- Peter Garlake, *Early Art and Architecture of Africa*
- John Thornton, *The Kongolese Saint Anthony*
- D.T. Niane, *Sundiata an Epic of Old Mali*

Course Assessment and Requirements

10% – Class attendance
20% – Four (4) in-class map Quizzes @ 5% each
30% – Three (3) Reflection Essays @ 10% each
10% – One (1) Analytical Essay
30% – Final Take Home Exam

Grading scale: A 94-100; A- 90-93; B+ 87-89; B 84-86; B- 80-83; C+ 77-79; C 74-76; C- 70-73; D+ 67-70; D 61-66; F 60 and below

The History Department and The University of Texas at Austin take Academic integrity, also known as Plagiarism, very seriously. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. For an overview of the University and Department's policy regarding scholastic dishonesty, see these websites:
http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/history/about/academic-integrity.php
http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php

Religious Holy Day Policy: In this course, we follow the UT Policy for observance of any religious holiday. The Student should inform the Professor as far in advance as possible to make arrangements.

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[1] *NB: Slight adjustments to syllabus possible by the first day of class.*

Course Grading Policy: The grades come in the +/- and straight range, as in: A+, A, A-, and so on. An A range grade signifies "exceptionally high achievement". The B range denotes "superior achievement". Students who receive a C range grade achieved a "satisfactory" mark. Then there are the lower marks- the D range calls attention to the students who achieved a "passing but unsatisfactory" mark. Likewise, an F range means "failure", and an "I" is an "incomplete" for the course.

Class Attendance and Participation: This is not a course by correspondence. To that end, your physical, intellectual, and whole self is expected in class each day. Missing more than two classes – for whatever reason – means you will automatically lose 50% of your attendance and participation grade. Plan accordingly.

Disability Statement: Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately as soon as possible to discuss his or her specific needs. I rely on the College of Liberal Arts for the need for reasonable accommodation based on documentation on file in their offices. Please act early as retroactive accommodation is not an option.

Classroom Etiquette: Respect is important both in and outside the classroom. In the classroom it means raising your hand, waiting your turn, and being respectful of different points of view on different issues. Also, except on designated days for particular course exercises, please *turn off/silence and store away* your electronic devices during class.

Communication: Updates about the class will be mainly through **Blackboard and email**. Please make sure you have an active UT email, and/or make sure your preferred email address is set up to receive class emails. Ignorance of important class information is inadmissible as an excuse.

Class Schedule:

Week 1 – Aug. 29: **Welcome & Course Overview.**
Wednesday: Course Introduction. Come to class having read: Ehret, *The Civilizations of Africa*, **Chp. 1**

Week 2 – Sept. 3: Four Major Civilizations that Shaped the History of Africa
Monday: NO CLASS – LABOR DAY HOLIDAY
Wednesday: Ehret, *The Civilizations of Africa*, **Chp. 2**

Week 3 – Sept. 10: **"Diverging Paths" of Africa's Four Major Civilizations**
Monday: Ehret, *The Civilizations of Africa*, **Chp. 4**
Wednesday: Ehret, *The Civilizations of Africa*, **Chp. 4**

Week 4 – Sept. 17: **Civilization without Citadels: Jenne-jeno**
Monday: McIntosh – *Ancient Middle Niger* (e-Library Reserve)
Wednesday: McIntosh – *Ancient Middle Niger*

Week 5 – Sept. 24: **Technology, Commerce, and Culture**
Monday: Ehret, *The Civilizations of Africa*, **Chp. 5**
Wednesday: Ehret, *The Civilizations of Africa*, **Chp. 5**

Week 6 – Oct. 01: **… *Restoring Women to History* (Berger & White)**
Monday: Berger, Part I – Women in East and Southern Africa, 5-35
Wednesday: Berger, Part I – Women in East and Southern Africa, 36-62 (e-Library Reserve)

Week 7 – Oct. 08: Of African Origin: The Great Zimbabwe and Controversies
Monday: Connah, *African Civilizations: An African Perspective*, **Chp. 8** (e-Reserve)
Wednesday: Pikirayi, *The Zimbabwe Culture*, **Chp. 5**

Week 8 – Oct. 15: Art and Architecture
Monday: Garlake, *Early Art and Architecture of Africa*
Wednesday: *Early Art and Architecture of Africa*

Week 9 – Oct. 22: **African Religion**
Monday: J.S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, **Chps 1 & 2** (e-Reserve)
Wednesday: Falola, *African Cultures*, **Chp. 8** (e-Reserve)

Week 10 – Oct. 29: Christianity in Africa
Monday: Thornton, *The Kongolese Saint Anthony*, **Chps 1-5.**
Wednesday: Thornton, *The Kongolese Saint Anthony*, **Chps 6-9**.

Week 11– Nov. 5: **Islam in Africa**.
Monday: Robinson: *Muslim Societies in African History*, selected chapters (e-Reserve)
Wednesday, Niane, *Sundiata*, **ALL**

Week 12 – Nov. 12: The Atlantic Slave Trade
Monday: Ehret, *The Civilizations*, **407-427**
Wednesday: Ehret, *The Civilizations*, **428-460**

Week 13 – Nov. 19: **Thinking History about Africa**
Monday: Library Research and Writing Analytical Essay
Wednesday: NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Week 14 – Nov. 26: **Do you now know your African Geography?**
Monday: Map Quizzes 1 & 2
Wednesday: Map Quizzes 3 & 4

Week 15 – Dec. 3: Semester Review
Monday: **Review** and Wrap-up.
Wednesday: No Class, Complete Take Home Exam which is **due** on the same day by 5:00pm in my office - GOOD LUCK.

Lihambe kahle, Mufambe Zvakanaka, Kwaheri, Goodbye!