

HIST 3443  
Africa and European Imperialism  
Winter 2010

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Office Hours: M-W-F 10:30-11:30 & 1:30-2:00

Course Description:

Africa's modern history has been shaped by the confrontation with European imperialism. This course follows this confrontation through the slave trade, the scramble for Africa, and state-building during the colonial era.

Texts:

Robert O. Collins, *Problems in African History: The Pre-colonial Centuries*, Markus Weiner, 1996  
Robert O. Collins, *Historical Problems of Imperial Africa*, Markus Weiner, 2000  
Marsye Conde, *Segu*, Penguin, 1987  
H. Ryder Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*, Broadview, 2002

Reference Texts:

J.D. Fage & Roland Oliver, General Editors, *The Cambridge History of Africa*, Reference Collection, Vaughn Library  
Kevin Shillington, *Encyclopedia of African History*, Reference Collection, Vaughn Library

Evaluation:

Research Paper: 30%  
Participation: 30%  
Book Reports: 20%  
Final: 20%

Research Paper:

The course is organized thematically, according to weekly topics, which are all given treatments in Robert O. Collins' *Problems in African History* and *Historical Problems in Imperial Africa*. Students will be required to choose one of these topics and submit a research paper by April 5. The paper will analyze relevant readings in the textbook, summarize the basic arguments in the texts, as well as discuss historical case studies from five other historical sources.

#### Participation:

There will be tests based on required readings: two scheduled tests on the novels (*Segu*, *King Solomon's Mines*). There will be in-class assignments based on readings from Collins; and two debates. The debates will be carried out in teams; however, individual participation in the debates will be the basis of your grade. See the Debate Guide in this syllabus.

#### Book Reports:

You will read both novels and submit reports (1500 words each) based on the questions included in this syllabus. The report on *Segu* will be submitted on February 15 and the report on *King Solomon's Mines* on March 15.

#### Final Exam:

The final will be an examination of the course themes.

#### Course Outline:

The course outline is numbered according to the approximate weeks of the term. The readings for each week should be completed beforehand, in preparation for discussions, assignments, or tests. All the readings listed below can be found in Robert O. Collins, ed., *Problems in African History* (2 vols.).

1. Introduction
2. Slavery in Africa
3. Slavery in Africa 2
4. Islam in Africa
5. Africa & Egypt
  - a. Test on *Segu*, February 12
6. Debate on Slavery
7. The Partition of Africa
8. Collaboration or Resistance
9. Colonial Rule
  - a. Test on *King Solomon's Mines*, March 12
10. Educating the African
11. Forging a National Identity

12. Exploitation or Development
13. Debate on Imperialism
14. Review

## **Book Report Guide**

### *Segu*

1. *Segu* illustrates three forces that define the history of 19<sup>th</sup> century Africa: Traditional Africa, Islamic Africa, and European Africa. Explain how these forces are dramatically represented in the novel.
2. Is it possible that indigenous African cultures persisted despite the advances of Islam and Christianity portrayed in *Segu*. Justify your answer with examples from the novel.

### *King Solomon's Mines*

1. A love of barbaric splendour and empty vistas epitomized the colonial mindset in South Africa. *King Solomon's Mines* romanticizes 'primitive' and 'tribal' Africa. With examples, explain how the novel represents this romantic Africa and why this is so important a part of the colonial mind-set?
2. The novel has been interpreted as a dramatic representation of two key themes in imperialism: the Scramble for Africa and the Native Question. Explain.

## **Debate Guide**

### Slavery & Slave Trade

1. The slave trade had a negative impact upon economics.
2. It has been argued that Africans would not enslave other Africans.
3. The slave trade has been defined as a European slave raid.
4. It has been said that Europeans had technological superiority.
5. It has been said that Africans became involved in the slave trade largely for economic motives. Rather than victims Africans used the slave trade to enrich and empower themselves.

6. It has been said that Africans traded slaves only for valuable commodities in high demand in Africa.
7. Some historians argue that the loss of population had a negative impact upon Africa.
8. The gun was entirely a positive factor for Africans in their trade with Europeans.
9. Did Africans or Europeans determine or control the terms of trade during the era of the slave trade?
10. The export of more men than women had a negative impact upon Africa's development.
11. The slave trade did not impact upon Africans uniformly, complicating the question of reparations.
12. It is said that reparations will bring justice and closure to the victims of slavery.  
<http://www.un.org/WCAR/durban.pdf>  
<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34754.pdf>

#### Imperialism/Colonialism

1. Colonialism was a racial system, causing immense cultural, social, and political damage to African societies. Do you agree?
2. European Imperialism had a negative impact upon Africa.
3. European land, labor and tax policies caused irreparable damage to African societies.
4. Europeans negated African indigenous cultures.
5. Europeans hardened or 'invented' ethnic or 'tribal' lines, which intensified social tensions and created conflicts.
6. Europeans created new cultural and class distinctions. This created conflict.
7. Europeans created artificial territorial states, which led to unstable governments and political systems.
8. European racism deprived Africans of rights of citizenship.
9. Europeans introduced ideas of citizenship and rights.

10. Europeans brought better health standards, which benefitted Africans.
11. Europeans developed new industries, which benefitted Africans.
12. Europeans developed infrastructure, such as railways, ports, telegraphs, as well as police and militaries.
13. Forms of colonialism (settler colonies; direct and indirect rule; French and British, Belgian and German) were distinctly different, complicating any generalizations.
14. American, British and French ideas of citizenship and rights, as well as the UN, resulted in the emancipation of Africans.

### **Essay Questions**

1. Rodney and Fage have diametrically opposed views of African slavery. Describe their positions and indicate which argument you find most convincing.
2. What role did African states have on the development of the Atlantic slave trade?
3. Consider the significance of external and internal dynamics to account for the operation of the Atlantic slave trade. Overall, how would you measure the impact of the slave trade upon Africa?
4. What accounts for the explosion of jihads in West Africa in the nineteenth century?
5. Explain the shifting balance of power between Yoruba, Hausa, and Fulani through the course of nineteenth century West African history.
6. What changes occurred in the relationships between Europeans and West Africans in the period after 1807? Discuss economic and political trends before the Scramble.
7. Using specific examples (Crowther, Horton, and Blyden etc.) explain why the Creoles (Krios) of Sierra Leone were so influential in shaping modern African cultures and politics? Account for the great appeal of Modernism and Africanism during the colonial era?
8. What factors or events were instrumental in bringing about the Scramble for Africa after 1878? Which was the most important?

9. What were some of the economic reasons for the abolition of the slave trade?  
Name some of the new economic activities that developed in Africa as a result of the new economy. What impact did this have upon Africans?
10. What makes the history of South Africa unique in the colonial period?
11. Explain the origin and evolution of the Native Question in colonial South Africa.
12. What were the causes and consequences of the Mfecane?
13. What were the most significant African initiatives of the 19<sup>th</sup> century?
14. Compare and contrast French and British forms of colonialism. How did these types of colonialism shape the emergence of African nation-states?
15. Analyze the origins of nationalism in Africa.
16. How did the Belgian colonial regimes shape the post-colonial conflicts in central Africa?