

History 3397– Section 05616
Central Africans and The Atlantic Diaspora
Prof. K. Klieman
T/TH 10-11:30
Spring 2007

Office – 526 Agnes Arnold Hall
Email: kklieman@uh.edu
Phone: 713 743-3106

Office Hours: Thursday 3-5
and by appointment
Classroom: 202 AH

This class will focus on the history of central African peoples both in Africa and the Americas. We will begin with a brief background to the cultures of Bantu-speaking peoples of Africa and their settlement into central Africa (c. 2000-1500 B.C.E.). Thereafter, the course will be divided into three parts: Central Africa in its Age of Glory (c. 500-1500 C.E.), Central Africa during the Atlantic Slave Trade Era (c. 1500-1900 C.E.) and Central Africans in the New World (c. 1700-2000). The latter section will look at the ways African captives retained their cultures even under the harsh systems of slavery that existed in the U.S., Haiti, and Brazil. The goal of the course is to expose you to the beauty and resilience of Central Africa cultures, and show how the political, religious, and cultural traits of Central Africans helped them to maintain their sanity, identity, and integrity even while being forced to endure the tragedy of enslavement in the New World.

We will have four main texts:

- Klieman, K. *"The Pygmies Were Our Compass": Bantu and Batwa in the History of West Central Africa, Early times to c. 1900.* (Heinmann, 2003)
- Mubima, Maneniang' *The Lianja Epic* (1999) (not in bookstore)
- Thornton, J. *The Kongolese St. Anthony: Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita and the Antonian Movement, 1684 – 1706.* (Cambridge, 1998)
- Heywood, Linda (ed.), *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora* (Cambridge 2002).

There are also a number of articles/ book chapters you will have to read

(see back page for the list – these will be made available to you on CD)

Course Requirements/Grading:

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| -Weekly Quizzes: in class/take home (10 total – you can drop or not do 2) | 15% |
| -2 Short Essays re: books (3-5 pages on Lianja Epic, St. Anthony – 5pts each) | 10% |
| -Week 8 Exam: (in class – 1 essay, 5 short answer) | 20% |
| -Week 15 Exam : (in class, last day of class – 1 essay, 5 short answer) | 25% |
| -Final Paper:(12-15 pages, topics and sources will be assigned) | 30% |
- (this paper will be due on Tuesday May 8th – the day you'd normally have a final exam)*

Opportunities for Extra Credit

1. Do a class presentation alone or with another student, based on readings from Diaspora book (last 3-4 weeks of course) 10 possible points added to final grade (!). The days/articles are indicated on syllabus by an asterisk (*) next to the date. As part of the project, students must meet with me a few days before class to go over what they will present.
2. Attend a community event about Africa, watch a film on your own (approved by me first), or read one of the chapters of the Diaspora book that we don't read. Each of these can gain 2.5 points, 2 possible (so max is 5 points added to final grade).

Course Regulations:

-Class Attendance is required! You will not be able to pass exams or class without being present (you won't be able to understand readings in fact)

-You need to bring your books to class. If there is reading assigned for that day, bring that book!

-If you aren't *in class* to turn in questions or take quiz - you get a "0".

No make ups if you are absent, late, or late in turning in assignments -you need to come to class.

-missed exams will only be excused with doctors notes or other formal documentation

-Late Research Papers will NOT be accepted.

- If the assignment says 12-15 pages you need to have 12 pages at least - anything less I will take off an entire grade - this does not mean 11 1/2 or even 11 and 3/4 pages. Do the full job.

- DO NOT TURN IN PAPERS BY PUTTING THEM UNDER MY OFFICE DOOR! If you do, you will not receive a grade. You must turn papers into the History Office (room 524) and have it timed and signed by the administrators who work there, then put in my mailbox.

-University Policy on academic honesty will be strictly reinforced. Plagiarism and "cheating" will not be tolerated, and can lead to a failing grade in the course and/or suspension from the University. If you are not clear about what plagiarism and/or "cheating" is, ask the professor, or see the university handbook.

-Attendance: you are expected to be in class for each meeting. Skipping class will drastically affect your grade, as approximately of the information on exams will be drawn from lectures. Missing quizzes will end up affecting your grade as well.

-Respect one another! In discussions and question/answer sessions, we must create an environment where all students feel free to ask questions, express their views. If this isn't allowed to happen, destructive myths and stereotypes continue to exist, nothing will be learned. Its ok to disagree; if you do, state it clearly, and we can go on to a lively, informative, and educational discussion or debate. Avoid personal attacks, avoid the use of racist, sexist, or offensive language. Either of these types of behavior can shutdown the learning process for individuals, and will not be tolerated in class. If you don't know what constitutes racist, sexist, offensive language - come see the professor in office hours to discuss.

-Last day to drop course w/out receiving a grade - Feb. 13, 2007

-“Q” Grade eligibility begins – Feb. 14, 2007

-Last day to drop course or withdraw/ “Q” Grade eligibility ends - April 3, 2007

If you are not passing the class at this point I will advise you to withdraw.

-Last but not least:

Please make me aware if you are having extreme troubles understanding the readings or class materials. Don't sit quiet all semester and suffer. No matter how confused you are I will work with you. If you are truly trying but keep getting bad grades, come see me and tell me. We can fix it.

Also, be aware that I am of the same "niceness" to people who are getting F's as people getting A's. Because I'm nice to you, (or you are nice to me), doesn't mean you are going to pass. I grade you on what you turn in on paper, nothing else. That's the only way I can compare you with others and be as objective as possible when grading.

Class Readings:

Note! Subject to Change at Professor's Discretion

Week 1:

Jan. 16– Intro to class

Jan. 18 – Discussion of Stereotypes/Intro to geography and peoples of Africa

Quiz #1 – Read Keim chapters (to be handed out) and do the following
Identify and write down five statements/ideas that you found very profound, list them, and under each, explain why had an impact on you.

Week 2:

Jan 23– methods for reconstructing ancient African history

Reading: Klieman, xv-xxxi

Quiz #2 – hand in questions

Jan 25 – Film by Bassek ba Kobio, “The Silence of the Forest”

Week 3:

Jan 30 – Finish film, Discuss Western Myths about the Batwa

Reading: Klieman Chpt. 1, Keim Chapter 4

Quiz #3 – Hand in assignment

Feb 1 – Niger-Congo peoples and the Bantu Expansion

Reading: Klieman Chpt. 2

Week 4:

Feb. 6 – Early Bantu/Batwa relations

Readings: Klieman, ch. 3

Quiz #4 – True/False in Class

Feb. 8 – The Introduction/Technology of Iron Production

Film: *The Tree of Iron*

Week 5:

Feb. 13 – The Impact of Bananas and Iron

Readings: Klieman, Ch. 4

Quiz: #5 – Hand in Questions

Feb. 15 – Political Centralization in the Rainforests

Readings: Vansina, 71-83, 101-127

Week 6:

Feb. 20 – *The Lianja Epic*

Readings: Read entire epic, we will discuss in class

Short Essay (3-5 pages) re: Epic (topic/questions will be handed out)

Feb. 22 – The Rise of the South Western States (Kongo, Loango, Tio/Teke)
Readings: Vansina, 146-165

Week 7:

Feb 27: The Kingdom of Kongo/The Arrival of the Portuguese

Readings: Balandier, *Daily Life in the Kingdom of Kongo* (Chapters 1 [pg. 27-41] “The Blacksmith King” and 2 [pg. 42-63] “The Christian King”)

Quiz #6 – Hand in

March 1 – No Class – professor at Conference

Week 8:

March 6: The Portuguese in Kongo/The Atlantic Slave Trade

Readings: Hilliard, C. “Affonso: The Evils of the Slave Trade
Vansina 198-237 (re: impact Atlantic Slave Trade on Central Africa)

March 8: **Midterm – Bring Blue Book, no name on it**

Week 9: No Classes – Spring Break!

Week 10:

March 20 – Kimpa Vita and the Antonian Movement

Have entire Thornton book read, we will discuss

**Short Essay (3-5 pgs) re: Kimpa Vita book
(Questions/topics will be handed out)**

March 22 - The Impact of the Slave Trade on Batwa communities

Readings: Klieman, Chpt. 6 and Conclusion

Week 11:

*March 27 – Central Africans in Brazil

Readings: Kiddy on Kongo Kings (p. 117-152 in Heywood)

Quiz #7 – Student presenters’ choice

*March 29 – Central Africans in Brazil

Readings: Slenes on The Great Porpoise Shell Strike
(p. 183-210 in Heywood)

Week 12:

*April 3– Central Africans in Brazil - Divination/Law

Readings: “African Divination in the Diaspora” (p. 119-137) of Sweet, J.
*Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship and Religion in the African-Portuguese
World, 1441-1770*

Quiz # 8 – student presenters’ choice

April 5- Central Africans in Haiti: The Haitian Revolution (lecture)

Week 13:

*April 10- Central Africans in Haiti - Kongolese Catholicism

Readings: Article by Rey (p. 265-288 Heywood)

Quiz # 9 - student's choice

*April 12 – Central African Martial Arts in the Americas

Reading: Desch-Obi on Combat techniques (p. 353-370 in Heywood)

Quiz #10 – Students Choice

Week 14:

April 17 – Guest Presentation: Capoeira Angola or Africanisms in Jamaican Culture

*April 19 – Central Africans in the U.S. – Resistance

Readings: Thornton on “African Dimensions of the Stono Rebellion”

Quiz #11 – Student's Choice

Week 15:

*April 24 - Central Africans in the U.S. – Environment/Art

Readings: – Ras Michael Brown

-Robert Ferris Thompson

Quiz #12 – Student's Choice

April 26 – **final Exam (in class)** – Bring Bluebook without name on it.

Note: Final Paper Due – Tuesday May 8, 2007 by 5:00 pm
(Submit to history department main office)

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Articles/book chapters you will be required to read (these will be made available on CD)

Vansina, J. *Paths in the Rainforest: Towards a History of Political Tradition in Equatorial Africa* p. 71-83, 101-127, 146-165, 198-237 (86 pages total)

Balandier, G. *Daily Life in the Kingdom of the Kongo* (Chapters 1 [pg. 27-41] “The Blacksmith King” and 2 [pg. 42-63] “The Christian King”)

Hilliard, C. *Intellectual Traditions of Pre-Colonial Africa*, pg. 356-358 - “Affonso of Kongo: The Evils of the Slave Trade.”

Sweet, J. *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (UNC Press, 2003). Chapter 6 - pgs. 119-137.

Thornton, J. “African Dimensions of the Stono Rebellion,” in *American Historical Review* vol. 96 (1991)(pages 1101-1113).

Farris Thompson, Robert. *Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy* (pgs. 103-158).