

Early African History

-- a multimedia approach

Northeastern University, Winter 1998

Sequence 2, MWTh 9:15

Prof. Patrick Manning

cross-listed:

AFR 1191 -- Key 65625

HST 1620-- Key 60335

- * Human evolution
- * Language, art and economy of early Africa
- * Ancient Egypt
- * Early Africa in world history
- * Archaeology of African civilization --
Nubia, Axum, Nok, Zimbabwe
- * Medieval empires -- Ghana, Mali, Songhai

Students will explore early life in Africa via lecture, discussion, video, CD-ROM, field trips, and by producing multimedia term projects.

course syllabus and supplements on the
World Wide Web at
<http://www.whc.neu.edu/whc/Teaching/AFR1191>

Texts:

D. W. Philippon, African Archaeology, 2nd ed.
Graham Connah, African Civilizations
D. T. Niane, Sundiata, an Epic of Old Mali
Readings packet to be purchased at Gnomon Copy
(includes articles marked below with *)

Course Assignments:

Participation	10%
Quizzes	10%
Map Work	10%
Multimedia Project	40%
Commentary on Multimedia Projects	10%
Final Exam	20%

Multimedia Project:

The main project in this course will be the development (by each individual student or by groups of students) of a multimedia teaching module on a topic in early African history. In preparing the project, students will work in the African-American Studies computer lab, and may also use other multimedia facilities available at the university. The project, in final form, may be in videotape, on a

computer disk, on World Wide Web files, or on paper -- the essential requirement is that it utilize more than one medium to convey information about an important issue in early African history.

Possible topics for multimedia projects:

- Early human evolution

- Recent human evolution

- African languages

- Development of agriculture

- Iron production

- Egypt and sub-Saharan Africa

- Bantu migrations

- Family and social life

- Early African commerce

- African states: Egypt, Nubia, Axum, Zimbabwe,
Ghana, Mali, Songhai, Kilwa, Benin

COURSE SCHEDULE

- Week 1. Overview (January 5, 7, 8)
- Week 2. Early human evolution (January 12, 14, 15)
Reading: *Y. Coppens, "East Side Story: The Origin of Humankind,"
Scientific American (May 1994)
*R. Blumenshine, "Scavenging and Human Evolution,"
Scientific American (October 1992)
- Week 3. Africa in Multiple Media (January 21, 22)
Map 1 due in class
- Week 4. Later human evolution (January 26, 28, 29)
Project Proposal due
Reading: *A. Wilson & R. Cann, "The Recent African Genesis of
Humans" Scientific American (April 1992)
*A. Thorne & M. Wolpoff, "The Multiregional Evolution of
Humans" Scientific American (April 1992)
D. Phillipson, African Archaeology, 1-33
- Week 5. Language, art and economy (February 2, 4, 5)
Quiz 1
Reading: *L. Cavalli-Sforza, "Genes, Peoples and Languages"
Scientific American (November 1991)
Phillipson, African Archaeology, 34-116
- Week 6. Ancient Egypt; Early Africa in world history (February 9, 11, 13)
Preliminary Project due
Reading: Phillipson, African Archaeology, 117-157
Connah, African Civilizations, 1-66
*C. Ehret, "East Africa in World History"
- Week 7. Archaeology of African civilization (February 16, 18, 19)
Map 2 due
Reading: Phillipson, African Archaeology, 158-207
Connah, African Civilizations, 67-97
- Week 8. Medieval empires (February 23, 25, 26)
Quiz 2
Reading: Niane, Sundiata
Connah, African Civilizations, 97-213
Phillipson, African Archaeology, 208-240

Week 9. Presentation of course projects (March 2, 4, 5)

Final project due

Reading: Connah, African Civilizations, 214-32

Week 10. Review and critique (March 9, 11, 12)

Commentary on projects due

Week 11. ***Final Exam (essay)***

Reading Packet

AFR 1191 -- Early African Civilization

Winter 1996

P. Manning

1. Y. Coppens, "East Side Story: The Origin of Humankind," Scientific American (May 1994)
2. R. Blumenshine, "Scavenging and Human Evolution," Scientific American (October 1992)
3. A. Wilson & R. Cann, "The Recent African Genesis of Humans" Scientific American (April 1992)
4. A. Thorne & M. Wolpoff, "The Multiregional Evolution of Humans" Scientific American (April 1992)
5. L. Cavalli-Sforza, "Genes, Peoples and Languages" Scientific American (November 1991)
6. C. Ehret, "East Africa in World History"