

AAS 306/HIS 306/HON 201 AFRICA TO 1800

Kenneth J. Orosz

Fall 2025

Class Meetings:

TR 10:50-12:05 Rockwell 303

Office Hours: W 10:00-2:00

And by appointment

Office: Cassety 337

Telephone: 878-3203

E-mail: oroszkj@buffalostate.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course surveys the sweep of African history from onset of human evolution to the abolition of the slave trade. Topics covered include Nubian Egypt, Bantu migrations, the Trans-Saharan trade, Islam in Africa, the slave trade, and early European colonization of southern Africa.¹

OFFICE HOURS

While I will be available in my office for face to face meetings during office hours, I am also available for virtual meetings. To take advantage of virtual office hours click on the appropriate menu button in Brightspace to reveal the Zoom link. Contact me via email if you cannot make regularly attended office hours so that we can set up an appointment.

TUTORING SERVICES

Buffalo State offers a wide variety of free tutoring services, including a Writing Center. For more information go to the [tutoring website](#).

REQUIREMENTS:

Academic misconduct (including cheating, plagiarism, and the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to do your work for you) will not be tolerated. Buffalo State College policies on academic misconduct, including the possible use of textual similarity detection software, are outlined in the college catalog. **Please note that the minimum penalty for cases of academic misconduct will be an F on the assignment.**

Reading assignments are to be completed by the dates given. There will a midterm and a final examination. Please note that in order to earn more than a B on the essay portion of the exams you must make use of the relevant assigned readings and historical documents. Students s will also write two 5 page analysis papers of assigned texts (one on the Gedge novel; one on the Hamdun & King Ibn Batuta reader) and a 10-12 page paper on a topic of their choice. All topics for the research papers must be authorized by me and must conform to the geographic and temporal confines of this course. As part of this process students are required to submit their paper topics in the form of written proposals no later than **October 21**. Failure to submit a passing proposal means that your paper will not be accepted and you will earn an E for that portion of the course. All papers and reviews must conform to the [History Style Sheet](#). Detailed [instructions](#) on the writing assignments, including the style sheet, can be found in Brightspace or

¹ Learning Outcomes: Student demonstrates knowledge of a) a broad outline of world history or b) at least one other world civilization/multi-cultural region in one or more historical period, including cultures, geography, institutions, societies, politics and economies; analyzes ways of thought in one or more historical period including at least two foundational fields of thought; classifies an era in terms of historical periodization, continuities and discontinuities, in the development of a non-western civilization or multi-cultural region; identifies information and ideas from at least one other world civilization/multi-cultural region and applies them to other world civilizations/multi-cultural regions (critical thinking).

by clicking the syllabi and course materials links at <http://faculty.buffalostate.edu/oroszkj>. Help for Brightspace can be found at <https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/learners/learners.htm>.

Please note that in order to pass this course you must make a good faith attempt to complete all components and requirements. **LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT PRIOR ARRANGEMENT.** Incompletes will be granted at the sole discretion of the instructor and require a written application outlining the rationale for granting an incomplete, a list of outstanding assignments and a timetable for their completion. This application must be signed and, if granted, will constitute a formal contract for the completion of the course.

At the collegiate level grades are based on mastery of content, methodology, and presentation, regardless of how hard you feel you worked on an assignment. Grades will be computed as follows:

Grades will be computed as follows:

Midterm Exam	25%	Final Exam	25%
Gedge Analysis	15%	Research Paper	20%
Ibn Batuta Analysis	15%		

COURSE POLICIES

1. Students must complete all work on their own. There are no group projects.
2. **The use of artificial intelligence (AI) is strictly forbidden and will be considered cheating since it is a computer, rather than the student, completing assignments. As with other cases of academic misconduct, the minimum penalty will be an F on the assignment.**
3. Except for cases of documented emergencies, I do not accept late work without prior arrangement. It is your responsibility to keep track of what is due each week by checking the syllabus.

RESEARCH PAPER PROPOSALS

Use of AI to write your paper is cheating and will be dealt with as such. All topics for the research papers must be authorized by me and must conform to the geographic and temporal confines of this course. Proposals must be submitted in writing and should consist of a sentence or two outlining your topic followed by a preliminary bibliography of 8-10 scholarly sources in which you provide complete publication information. The use of encyclopedias and websites beyond those already assigned are not allowed. Do not restrict yourself to what is present in our library, since our collection in African history is incomplete and often dated. To find books you will need to make use of the library's Worldcat Discovery database; if we do not own the text, you will then need to order it via interlibrary loan. You can find peer reviewed journal articles by using the library's JSTOR and Project Muse databases.

The bibliography of passed proposals can be amended via a simple email to your instructor. While proposals are due **October 21**, you can change your topic by submitting a new proposal for approval until the day the paper is due. This is the only assignment with this kind of flexibility. Please note that if I do not have a passed proposal on file when I begin grading, I will not read your paper and you will receive an F on the assignment. If you choose to gamble by

turning in your revised proposal with your paper on **December 4** you run the risk that your proposal will fail and your paper will be rejected unread.

SUBMITTING PAPERS

Submitting papers requires a 3 part process:

1. You must pass a quiz confirming that you have read and followed the directions before the Dropbox will appear. This quiz will become available the Course Activities tab 2 weeks before the assignment is due and can be retaken as needed.
2. If you have successfully completed the quiz, then the Dropbox will appear in the Assignments section of the Course Activities tab. You must upload your paper as a word document (.doc or .docx only) to the Turnitin dropbox by **3:00 PM** on the due date.
3. You must bring a printed and stapled copy and turn it in during class time on the due date. **I will not grade any papers that have not been submitted to the dropbox and for which I do not also have a paper copy.**

Note: You may submit revisions of your paper up until the due date. Among the things you should check is the Turnitin Originality Report to help guard against plagiarism. To see the report click on the colored rectangular icon next to your submission. If the icon is gray, your report is still being processed; check back within the next 24 hours.

BOOKS: The following books are required reading and are available in the Bookstore:

William Bovill, <u>The Golden Trade of the Moors</u> , rev. ed.	978-1-558-76091-2
Christopher Ehret, <u>Civilizations of Africa to 1800</u> , 2 nd ed	978-0-813-92880-7
Linda Heywood, <u>Njinga of Angola</u>	978-0-674-23744-5
David Northrup, <u>Africa's Discovery of Europe</u> 3 rd ed	978-0-199-94121-6*
Donald Redford, <u>From Slave to Pharaoh</u> , 4 th ed	978-1-421-40409-7**
Pauline Gedge, <u>The Twelfth Transforming</u>	978-0-912-77729-0
Hamdun & King, <u>Ibn Battuta in Black Africa</u> , rev ed.	978-1-558-76336-4

*Available as free ebook from Butler Library's [ACLS Humanities ebook database](#).

**Available as free ebook from Butler Library's [Proquest ebook database](#).

SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS:

Any reading listed on the syllabus that does not come from a required textbook is either a website or has been posted to Brightspace. To further help you identify them, supplemental readings are in italics. They can be accessed in one of 3 ways: 1) If it is a website, there will be a link to it from the electronic version of the syllabus available in Brightspace or on my web page at <http://faculty.buffalostate.edu/oroszkj>. Please note that the "Broadcast" links are versions of a radio program, hence there is no video to watch. When the page opens make sure you click the "Listen now" icon on the left side of the screen. 2) Materials highlighted in blue have been uploaded to weekly folders in the Supplemental Readings section of Brightspace. A) If the item

is a PDF, simply click on it to open and read. B) If it is a PowerPoint, click the down arrow next to the file name and select download from the menu (files are large, so do on WiFi only).

Navigate to your download folder and open the file. Follow the directions on the first slide to get it to play.

William Adams, "The First Colonial Empire: Egypt in Nubia 3200-1200 BC" *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26 (1984): 36-71

Walter Ameling, "The Rise of Carthage to 264 BC," in *A Companion to the Punic Wars*, ed. Dexter Hoyos (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 39-57.

Leonard Guelke, "Anatomy of a Colonial Settler Population: Cape Colony 1657-1750," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 21, no. 3 (1988) : 453-473.

Robin Law, "A West African Cavalry State: The Kingdom of Oyo," *Journal African History* 16, no. 1 (1975): 1-15.

Shula Marks, "Kohisan Resistance to the Dutch in the 17th and 18th Centuries," *Journal of African History* 13, no. 1 (1972) : 55-80.

Aran Mackinon, *The British and the Expanding Cape*, in *The Making of South Africa* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2004), 46-70.

Malyn Newitt, "Portuguese Conquistadores in Eastern Africa," *History Today* (30, no. 8 (August 1980) : 19-25.

Jacobus van Dijk, "The Amarna Period and the Later New Kingdom (c. 1352-1069 BC)" in Ian Shaw (ed) *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 265-307.

James Waterson, "The Mamluks," *History Today* 56, no. 3 (March 2006): 21-27.

CLASS SCHEDULE

August 26 **Introduction and Historical Geography of Africa**

Read: [How to Write History Papers](#); [Nature of History](#)

August 28 **Paleolithic and Origins Agriculture**

Read: Ehret Ch 1-3; *Human Origins* [Part 1](#); [Part 2](#); [Part 3](#);

September 2 **Ancient Egypt: Archaic Period**

Read: Ehret Ch 4; [Origins Ancient Egypt Debate](#);
[Africa & Nile Valley Broadcast](#)

September 4 **Ancient Egypt: Old and Middle Kingdoms**

Read: Redford Ch 1-3; [Adams, "First Colonial Empire;"](#)
Funerary Equipment [pages 1-5](#)

September 9 **Ancient Egypt: New Kingdom**

Read: [Nefertiti: Egypt's Mysterious Queen](#); [Nefertiti: Wife, Mother, Queen](#)
[Van Dijk, "Amarana Period" pages 265-285](#); [Nefertiti the Queen](#)

September 11 **Nubia**

Read: Gedge novel; Redford Ch 4-12; [Nubia](#);

September 16	Kush and Meroë
Read:	Redford Ch 13-Epilog; Selection of Aspalta as King of Kush ; Meroë
September 18	Greco-Roman North Africa
Read:	Ameling, "Rise of Carthage" ; Bovill Ch 1-3; The Periplus ; African Geography
September 23	Greco-Roman North Africa
Read:	Bovill Ch 4-5; Ancient Mauritania ; Classical North Africa Gedge analysis paper due
September 25	Axum and Christian Nubia
Read:	Ezana of Axum ; Procopius History of the Wars ; Coming of Christianity Broadcast
September 30	The Arrival of Islam
Read:	Rise of Islam Broadcast ; Islam in Africa Part 1 ; Part 2 ; Part 3 ; Part 4
October 2	Fatimids, Almoravids and Almohads
Read:	Ehret Ch 7; Bovill Ch 6
October 7	Almoravids and Almohads
Read:	Bovill Ch 7; Islam and Trade ;
October 9	Midterm
October 14	No Class
October 16	Trans-Saharan Trade and Rise of Ancient Ghana
Read:	Bovill Ch 8-22; Ancient Ghana Broadcast ; Ancient Ghana ; On the Zanj ; Ghana in 11th Century ;
October 21	Mali and Songhai
Read:	Hamdun & King book; Empires of Mali and Songhay Broadcast ; Empire of Mali ; Mansa Musa in Cairo ; Timbuktu ; Songhai ; Paper topics due
October 23	Kanem-Bornu and the Hausa States
Read:	Bovill Ch 23-25; Hausa States Broadcast ; Hausa States ; Kanem ;
October 28	West African Forest States
Read:	Law, "West African Cavalry State" ; The Oyo Empire ; Ifé and Benin ; Decades of the New World
October 30	West African Forest States
Read:	Asante ; Kingdoms of Dahomey and Ashanti African Religions Part 1 ; Part 2 ; Part 3 ; Part 4 ; Part 5 ; Part 6 ;

November 4	Mamluk Egypt and Ottoman North Africa
Read:	Mamluks Broadcast ; Waterson, "Mamluks" ; Hamdun & King analysis due
November 6	Christian Ethiopia
Read:	Ehret Ch 5; <i>Christianity in Africa</i> Part 1 ; Part 2 ; Part 3 ; Christianity in Ethiopia ;
November 11	Bantu Migrations and Iron Age Africa
Read:	Ehret Ch 9; Northrup Ch 3-4; Bantu Migrations Broadcast ; Cattle Raising Cultures
November 13	Swahili City States
Read:	Ehret Ch 6; Great Zimbabwe ; Mystery of Great Zimbabwe Islam in East Africa ; Swahili Coast Broadcast ;
November 18	Central Africa Before the Portuguese
Read:	Ehret Ch 8; Northrup Ch 1-2; Heywood Intro-Ch 2; Luba and Lunda Kingdoms ; Kongo's African Trade Kongo & Great Zimbabwe Broadcast
November 20	Portuguese Africa
Read:	Heywood Ch 3-7; Newitt, "Portuguese Conquistadores;" Portuguese in the West ; Portuguese Missionaries ; Dona Beatriz ; Portuguese in East Africa
November 25	African Slave Trades
Read:	Northrup 5-6; Roots African Slavery Broadcast ;
November 27	No Class
December 2	African Slave Trades
Read:	<i>Slave Trade</i> Part 1 ; Part 2 ; Part 3 ; Part 4 ; Part 5 ; Part 6 <i>Abolition</i> Part 1 ; Part 2 ;
December 4	Europeans in South Africa
Read:	Khoi Servant Speaks ; Marks, "Khoisan Resistance;" Guelke, "Anatomy of Settler Population;" British & Expanding Cape Research Papers Due
December 9	Final Exam 9:40-11:30 AM

Instructions for Papers

Students in this course are required to do their own original work, hence the use of artificial intelligence (AI) constitutes cheating and is strictly forbidden because it is a computer, rather than the student, doing the assignment. The minimum penalty for violating this policy is an F for the assignment, but in most cases students will also receive a failing grade for the course and will be

reported to the Academic Misconduct Committee for possible additional penalties.

While your papers will be graded primarily on content and the strength of your arguments, grammatical accuracy, style, presentation and organization will also be taken into account. As with a medical diagnosis, your arguments will be stronger if you can offer second opinions, hence your papers should, wherever possible, include supporting evidence drawn from more than one source. **All papers are required to adhere to the History Style Sheet** which is available in Brightspace and on my web site. Failure to follow the style sheet will result in significant penalties; these consist of at least the loss of a full letter grade for each category of violation (i.e. use of contractions will cost you a letter grade, reducing an A paper to a B). This includes paper length, non-standard fonts, margins and line spacing. Please note that a short paper is not necessarily a bad paper; I am primarily interested in what you have to say, how well you say it and if you have developed your thesis and argument sufficiently.

As you write your papers, you may paraphrase or quote suitable passages that illustrate your points. However, if you do quote or paraphrase, you must cite the relevant passage. You must also cite detailed information (i.e. statistics or items that are not common knowledge). The only exception to this rule is material gleaned from my lectures; you may assume that this is public knowledge and requires no citation. Proper citation formats can be found in the History Style Sheet. Please note that in addition to enforcing Buffalo State College's policies on academic misconduct, including the possible use of textual similarity detection software, **the minimum penalty for plagiarism is an F on the assignment**. For more information on plagiarism, how to footnote, or how to write a research paper consult the relevant sections of Benjamin's *A Student's Guide to History*. If you are still unclear about when or how to cite please come see me during my office hours. That is why I am there.

Since much of what is out on the internet is of dubious quality, **the use of web pages as source material is strictly forbidden** unless authorized by me in writing. The only exceptions to this rule are the individual web sites that I have assigned as required reading material. On a similar note, **the use of encyclopedias is also forbidden**. While they may be useful reference tools or for providing an overview of a particular topic, encyclopedias have no place in college level work. Articles in historical encyclopedias (i.e. *The Encyclopedia of European Social History*) may be acceptable, but must first be cleared by me in writing.

I am obviously a firm believer in written assignments since they help develop your organizational, analytical and communication skills, all of which are things you will need in the workplace. Consequently, I expect you to treat all graded assignments (in this or any other class) as preparations for your future career. Turning in business reports that are filled with grammatical errors, failures in logic, poor argumentation and lack of evidence portrays a degree of incompetence, even if it is undeserved, and will probably get you fired. Get in the habit now of proofreading your work to catch typos, misspellings and nonsensical statements. Read your papers aloud to see how they sound. Better still, have a friend or roommate read your work since they are more likely to notice any problems. Most of you will be writing your papers on wordprocessors. No matter what program you use, they all have spell checkers. It is silly and self-defeating not to make use of them.

While I do not allow rewrites once papers have been graded, I will read and comment on rough drafts if I am given enough time. Alternatively, you may want to consult either the campus writing center or some of the history tutors for help or advice. Keep your notes and copies of your paper to facilitate rewrites and to safeguard against loss, computer errors, random destruction by pets and similar catastrophes. Finally, and most importantly, if you are having any problems in this course come see me.

Book Analyses

All students will write two 5 page (1500 words) analyses of assigned texts (Gege's *The Twelfth Transforming* and Hamdun & King's reader *Ibn Batuta in Black Africa*). Since these are analyses and not "book reports" I am not interested in plot summaries. Similarly, I am not interested in whether you liked the book or found it interesting. Your review should analyze and critique the author's portrayal of some of the historical events or themes covered in this course. As you critique the books use the following questions as a rough guide: How do the authors portray historical events or issues covered elsewhere in the course? How accurate are these depictions? Have they added to your understanding of the period in question?

As you will discover, 5 pages provides barely enough room to introduce a topic, let alone go into much detail. Hence, your papers should have a narrowly defined thesis and must be very selective in both their use and presentation of supporting evidence or examples. Since these papers are so short keep quotations to a minimum so that you will have more room to develop your own thoughts and arguments. To strengthen your argument(s), however, your analyses must draw upon and cite specific examples from the novel as well as corroborating evidence from more than one source. **There is ample material on which to base your book analyses papers in assigned course materials (lectures and readings); if you wish to use outside materials, you must first obtain permission from me in writing.**

Research Paper

In addition to the book analyses, all students will write a 10-12 page (3000-3600 word) paper on a topic of their own choice. While the actual topics for your papers are up to you, they must remain within the geographical and temporal confines of this course. The paper should analyze some facet of African history in detail. To that end, and to help you identify sources, all paper topics must be cleared with me first in the form of a written paper proposal due no later than **October 21**. Complete proposals will outline your topic, the specific issues you intend to address, and must include a bibliography. If, after you have begun researching and writing your paper, you choose to use additional sources, you must submit an amended bibliography to me in writing. **Papers that use unauthorized materials will not be accepted. Similarly, papers that deviate significantly from your research proposal will also not be accepted.** This does not mean, however, that you are permanently locked in to a particular paper topic; if you change your mind and opt to pursue some other topic you must submit a new paper proposal which may or may not be accepted at my discretion. Completed papers are due in class on **December 4**.

Possible paper topics include

The Bantu Migrations
Portuguese Prazeros
Mansa Musa
The Fall of Songhai

Euware the Great
The Trans-Saharan Trade
Nubian Egypt
Christianity in Ethiopia