NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

HISTORY V55.0532

WORLD CULTURES:

THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

Spring 2003
Professor Michael Gomez
Office: King Juan Carlos I Center 511
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 3:30-5:30pm
Office Phone: 212-998-8624

BOOKS FOR PURCHASE

Reading Packet (available at)
Aimé Césaire, Discourse on Colonialism
Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass
Carolyn Fick, The Making of Haiti
Bernard Lewis, Race and Slavery in the Middle East
Benedita da Silva, An Afro-Brazilian Woman’s Story of Politics and Love
Sheila Walker, African Roots/American Culture
Irma Watkins-Owens, Blood Relations: Caribbean Immigrants of the Harlem Community

OVERVIEW

This course will introduce students to the history of the African Diaspora; that is, the history of the dispersal of Africans and their descendants throughout much of the world. From antiquity, such populations have made their way through the realms of the Mediterranean and Europe, Islam, Asia, and the Americas. At times their movement has been voluntary; often it was compelled. Throughout the long history of the African Diaspora, the African has been both conqueror and conquered, slaveholder and enslaved. In all circumstances, Africans and their progeny have made significant and lasting contributions to the economies and cultures of the societies into which they have been introduced.

We will attempt to follow the progression of this Diaspora, in effect a series of diasporas, both temporally and thematically. Our queries are multiple: What were the conditions that led to their dispersals? What were the circumstances under which Africans were received? If introduced under conditions of inequality, what are the legacies of those inequalities? How was the fabric of the society in question altered? What have been the cultural manifestations of the African presence? How have technologies and industries been impacted by their contributions? How have notions of collective identity changed over time? To what extent have the experiences throughout the African Diaspora converged/diverged?
Throughout the course, students will be assigned readings, but **will need to attend the weekly lectures**, which will establish continuity and a framework for understanding both the readings and the particular historical period within which the text is embedded. All readings should be prepared prior to class.

**Grade Criteria**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Response Papers</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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**Response papers** are to be 3pp in length (double-spaced, normal font) and argumentative. Assignments will be issued every two to three weeks, and will be graded on an A-F scale. *All assignments must be completed to pass the course.*

**Policies**

**Recording and Transcription:** Audio-taping and other methods of mechanized recording are not permitted unless authorized by the professor.

**Late Work:** Any work submitted after the particular due date will suffer the loss of **one whole grade**. *Late work will not be accepted after the due date and time of the final exam.*

**Probity:** Violations of academic probity will meet with a response in conformity with official university policy. See attached addenda on academic guidelines and integrity.

**Objectives**

as a result of completing History V55.0532, each student will have:

- demonstrated a familiarity with the historical development of the African Diaspora from antiquity to modern times.
- critically read primary texts.
- successfully written analytical response papers.
- successfully completed a final examination.

**Website**

Please regularly consult the course website for syllabi, addenda, assignments, suggested readings, and all information pertinent to the course.
Schedule

Lectures meet Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 2:00 to 3:15pm.
Recitation Schedules and Preceptors are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Preceptor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>9:30-10:45am</td>
<td>Marc Goulding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>11:00-12:15pm</td>
<td>Marc Goulding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>3:30-4:45pm</td>
<td>Natasha Lightfoot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>4:55-6:10pm</td>
<td>Natasha Lightfoot</td>
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Lecture Schedule

Jan 21 and 23
Assigned Reading
Frank Snowden, excerpts from Before Color Prejudice (packet)
Further Reading

Jan 28 and 30
Assigned Reading
Frank Snowden, excerpts from Before Color Prejudice (packet)
Further Reading
Frank Snowden, Blacks in Antiquity: Ethiopians in the Greco-Roman Experience; William Leo Hansberry Africa and Africans as Seen by Classical Writers.

Feb 4 and 6
Assigned Reading
Kebran Negest (or The Queen of Sheba) (packet)
Further Reading
St. Clair Drake, Black Folk Here and There: An Essay in History and Anthropology, 2 vols.; Steven Kaplan, The Beta Israel (Falasha) in Ethiopia: From Earliest Times to the Twentieth Century; Sergew Hable Sellassie, Ancient and Medieval Ethiopian History to 1270; Donald N. Levine, Greater Ethiopia: The Evolution of a Multiethnic Society; Cain Hope Felder, Troubling Biblical Waters: Race, Class, and Family; Charles B. Copher, Black Biblical Studies: An Anthology of Charles B. Copher; James Cone, For My People: Black Theology and the Black Church.

Feb 11 and 13
Assigned Reading

The Classical Islamic World and Africa
Further Reading
Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East*
Nehemia Levtzion, *Ancient Ghana and Mali*; Jamil Abun-Nasr,
Jamil M. *A History of the Maghrib in the Islamic Period*; J.F.A.
Bovill, *The Golden Trade of the Moors*; Frederick Cooper,
*Plantation Slavery on the East Coast of Africa*; Randle L. Pouwels,
*Horn and Crescent: Cultural Change and Traditional Islam on the*
*East African Coast, 800-1900*; Joseph E. Harris, *The African*
*Presence in Asia; Consequences of the East Asian Slave Trade.*

Feb 18 and 20
Assigned Reading
Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East*
Further Reading
cul de saints dans l’islam maghrébin*; Mohammed Ennaji,
*Serving the Master: Slavery and Society in Nineteenth-Century*
Morocco; Y. Hakan Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and Its*
Demise, 1800-1909; Ehud R. Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition in*
the *Ottoman Middle East.*

Feb 25 and 27
Assigned Reading
Michael A. Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks* (packet)
Sheila Walker, *African Roots/American Cultures*
Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of*
Olaudah Equiano (packet)
Further Reading
Joseph E. Harris, *The African Diaspora*; Joseph E. Harris, *Global*
*Dimensions of the African Diaspora*, 2nd ed.; Ralph Austen,
*African Economic History: Internal Development and External*
*Dependency*; David Eltis, Stephen D. Behrendt, David Richardson,
and Herbert Klein, *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: A Database on*
*CD-ROM*; Joseph E. Inikori, *Forced Migration: The Impact of the*
*Export Slave Trade on African Societies*; Patrick Manning, *Slavery*
*and African Life: Occidental, Oriental, and African Slave Trades*;
Joseph C. Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the*
*Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830*; Guy A. Settipane, *Columbus*
*and the New World: Medical Implications.*

March 4 and 6
Assigned Reading
Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
Sheila Walker, *African Roots/American Cultures*
Further Reading
Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra de México: estudio*
*ethnohistórico*, 2nd ed.; Laird W. Bergad, Fe Iglesias García, María
del Carmen Barcia, *The Cuban Slave Market, 1790-1880*; Ira
Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery*
in *North America*; Gabriel Debien, *Les esclaves aux Antilles*
françaises, XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles; Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and*

March 11 and 13
Assigned Reading
Revolt
Carolyn Fick, The Making of Haiti
Sheila Walker, African Roots/American Cultures
Further Reading

March 17-22
SPRING BREAK

March 25 and 27
Freedom?
W.E.B. Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk (packet)
Sheila Walker, African Roots/American Cultures
Further Reading

April 1 and 3
Assigned Reading
Reconnecting: Movement and Belief
Irma Watkins-Owens, Blood Relations: Caribbean Immigrants of the Harlem Community
Further Reading

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<th>April 8 and 10</th>
<th>Cultural Efflorescence</th>
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<tr>
<td>Assigned Reading</td>
<td>Irma Watkins-Owens, <em>Blood Relations</em></td>
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<td>Sheila Walker, <em>African Roots/American Cultures</em></td>
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<th>Post-World War Two Developments</th>
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<th>Post-World War Two Developments (continued)</th>
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<th>April 29/May 1</th>
<th>Postmodern Meditations</th>
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<td>(to be discussed)</td>
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| May 6 | Reading Day |
| May 7-14 | Finals Week |