Health, Healing and Hunger in Modern Africa

Steven Feierman
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Office Hours: Weds. 1-2:00; Thurs. 4-5:00

Course Requirements:

Students are required to work on three assigned special topics -- the history of Zulu healing (with a brief paper due in week 5); the relationship between colonial conquest and disease ecology in East Africa (to be examined in a blue book during week 8); and the history of spirit possession cults, infertility, and malnutrition in Zambia (covered in a short paper due in week 13). While students are studying special topics in detail, the lectures are meant to cover the whole history of health, healing, and hunger in Africa during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The end of term exam, with questions to be distributed in advance, will ask students to make a broad synthesis based mainly on the lectures.

Course Outline

Lecture Topics are Tentative


Readings: "The Last Safari to Pagak," from Song_of_lawino, by Okot p'Bitek. 149-175.

Part I

Readings for the Exercise on Zulu Healing.

Lectures: Kinship Authority over Therapy.
Nineteenth Century Zulu Healing.


Week 3. February 7, 9.
Lectures: The differentiation of South Africa's Population.
Changing Household Structure and Healing: Northern Tanzania.

Readings: Omer-Cooper. "Shaka and the Rise of the Zulu." in Klein and
Week 4. February 14. 16.
Pre-colonial Food Security.

Martin West, Bishops and Prophets, 91-124.

Week 5. February 21. 23.
Tuesday session. Film: The Long Search. Zulu Zion.
Thursday, class cancelled for work on papers. due Friday February 24
at history office front desk by 1:30 PM

Part II

Readings for the Exercise on Conquest and Disease Ecology

Lectures: Conquest: Maji Maji and the Women's War.
Trypanosomiasis and Loss of Control over the Environment.

Readings: Iliffe, Tanganyika under German Rule, 9-29.
Maji Maji Documents.
Helge Kjekshus, Ecology Control and Economic Development in East
African History, 126-179.

Week 7. March 7. 9.

Lectures: Changing Networks of Food Security.
Conquest and Health: the Regions of Africa.

Readings: Cruickshank et al. Epidemiology and Community Health in Warm
Climate Countries, 295-301. Use a medical dictionary, available
at most libraries under call number R 121, and then a sub-number.
The medical dictionary in Memorial Library Reference (2nd floor)
is R121 T47 1967. There is also a medical dictionary shelved
with the foreign language dictionaries in the Graduate Reading
Room, 420 Memorial Library. Use the John Ford maps for lecture
reference.

Leroy Vail. "Ecology and History: the example of eastern Zambia."

Week 8. March 14, 16.
Thursday: Blue Book on Disease Ecology.

Lectures: Malaria.
Art and Health.


Part III

Readings for the Exercise on Women's Cults of Affliction

Week 10. April 4, 6.

Victor Turner. The Forest of Symbols. 1-16.

Week 11. April 11, 13.
Lectures: Indirect Rule and Food Supplies.


Week 12. April 18, 20.
Lectures: Colonialism, Health Care, and Social Costs.
Female Circumcision.


Week 13. April 25, 27.
Lectures: The Expansion of Health Care.
Famine and Entitlements.

Week 14. May 2. 1.

Lectures: The Professionalization of Popular Healing.
AIDS


Week 15. May 9. In-class exam.
May 11. Health in Africa Today.