

University of Wisconsin-Madison
Department of History
Fall 2005

History 444: History of East Africa

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Course Description:

Welcome to History 444. This course considers a number of major themes in the history of East Africa. Because this region contains a remarkable array of languages, cultures, and peoples, we cannot hope for exhaustive coverage. Instead, we will visit several historical zones during the course and will focus particular attention on four places: the kingdom and nation-state of Rwanda; the kingdom of Buganda in present-day Uganda; the Swahili coast; and the highlands of central Kenya. In addition to exploring such themes as the shifting relationship between political and ritual authority, the impact of colonial rule on various East African communities, and the historical roots of the many challenges currently faced by East African nations, we will also examine some of the methods that historians use to reconstruct East African history. In this way, I hope that you will take away from the course an understanding not just of *what* to think about the history of East Africa but also *how* to think historically about this region of the world.

Requirements and Grading:

1) Written Assignments

- a) Paper #1 (due in class on 10/6): take-home exam covering weeks 1-4. The exam will be handed out in class on 9/29. 25% of final grade.
- b) Paper #2 (due in class on 10/25): 4-5 page critical discussion of the film "The Swahili Coast" with reference to Jonathon Glassman's *Feasts and Riot*. Paper topics will be handed out in class on 10/18. 20% of final grade.
- c) Paper #3 (due in class on 11/22): take-home exam covering weeks 6-11. The exam will be handed out in class on 11/15. 25% of final grade.
- d) Paper #4: take-home final exam. 30% of final grade.

- 2) Class Participation: students are required to attend all lectures. In addition, there will be periodic discussion sessions during which you will be expected to come to class prepared to discuss the week's readings and to actively participate in discussion. Both attendance and participation in discussions will be noted and will be taken into account in calculating your final grade.

Required Readings:

The following books are available for purchase at the University Bookstore and are also on reserve at Helen C. White:

Jonathon Glassman, *Feasts and Riot: Revelry, Rebellion, and Popular Consciousness on the Swahili Coast, 1856-1888.*

Holly E. Hanson, *Landed Obligation: The Practice of Power in Buganda*

Philip Gourevitch. *We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families: Stories from Rwanda.*

I have also collected a set of readings for you to purchase from the copy center in the Humanities building (room 1650) and have placed a copy of the course packet on reserve at Helen C. White. (cp) indicates that readings appear in the course packet.

Schedule of Lectures, Readings, and Written Assignments:

Week 1 (Sep. 5-9)

9/6 Introduction to Course: Knowing Africa - Preconceptions and Misconceptions

9/8 Mapping East Africa: Geography, Language, and Ideals of Social Organization

Reading: John McCall, "Social Organization in Africa" (cp)
Thomas Spear, "Introduction," in *Kenya's Past*, xii-xxiv (cp)

Probing the Early East African Past

Week 2 (Sep. 12-16)

9/13 Early Great Lakes History and the Cwezi Kubandwa Revolution

Reading: David L. Schoenbrun, "We Are What We Eat: Ancient Agriculture Between the Great Lakes" (cp)
Iris Berger, "Deities, Dynasties, and Oral Tradition: The History and Legend of the Abacwezi" (cp)

9/15 Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa in Precolonial Rwanda

Reading: Jan Vansina, "Central Rwanda on the Eve of the Emergence of the Kingdom" (cp)

Week 3 (Sep. 19-23)

9/20 Land and Power in Buganda

Reading: Holly Hanson, *Landed Obligation*, 25-87

9/22 Farmers, Herders, and the Pastoral Revolution

Reading: T. Spear, "Introduction," in Spear and R. Waller, *Being Maasai* 1-18 (cp)
J. Bernsten, "The Maasai and their Neighbors" (cp)

Week 4 (Sep. 26-30)

9/27 Political Culture in Central Kenya

Reading: Charles Ambler, "The Formation of New Societies" (cp)
T. Spear, "Processes of Cultural Development," 71-82, 99-105 (cp)

9/29 The Rise of Swahili Culture and the Classical Age of Swahili City-States

Reading: M. Horton and J. Middleton, "The Swahili Coast" and "The Trading System of the Swahili Coast" (cp)
Anonymous, "An Arabic History of Kilwa Kisiwani c.1520," 34-37 (cp)

Hand Out Exam

Week 5 (Oct. 3-7)

10/4 No Class: Rosh Hashanah

Slaves, Ivory, and the Expansion of Trade in the 19th Century

10/6 Commercial Expansion in the 19th Century

Reading: Jonathon Glassman, *Feasts and Riot*, 29-78

EXAM DUE IN CLASS

Week 6 (Oct. 10-14)

10/11 Transformations in Slavery

Reading: Glassman, *Feasts and Riot*, 79-114

10/13 Film: "The Swahili Coast"

Reading: Glassman, *Feasts and Riot*, 117-145

Week 7 (Oct. 17-21)

10/18 Citizenship and Identity in Swahili Communities

Reading: Glassman, *Feasts and Riot*, 146-174

Hand Out Paper Topics

Colonial Conquest and Resistance

10/20 Invasion of the Mrima Coast and the Maji Maji Rebellion

Reading: Jamie Monson, "Relocating Maji Maji: the politics of alliance and authority in the Southern Highlands of Tanganyika" (cp)

Week 8 (Oct. 24-28)

10/25 The Establishment of Settler Colonialism in Kenya

Reading: John Lonsdale, "The Conquest State of Kenya, 1894-1908" (cp)
R. Meinertzhagen, *Kenya Diary: 1902-06*, select pages (cp)

PAPER DUE IN CLASS

10/27 The Christian Revolution in Buganda

Reading: Hanson, *Landed Obligation*, 93-126

Political and Economic Dilemmas in Colonial East Africa

Week 9 (Oct. 31-Nov. 4)

11/1 Indirect Rule and the Construction of the Colonial State

Reading: Hanson, *Landed Obligation*, 127-163

11/3 The Colonial Economy: Land, Labor, and Chiefly Authority

Reading: Hanson, *Landed Obligation*, 165-202

Social Changes in Colonial East Africa

Week 10 (Nov. 7-11)

11/8 Disease and Authority in Colonial East Africa

Reading: James Giblin, "Colonialism, Famine, and Epizootic, 1884-1914" (cp)
Holger B. Hansen, "The Colonial Control of Spirit Cults in Uganda" (cp)

11/10 Women, Migrant Labor, and the Transformation of Agricultural Production

Reading: Jean Hay, "Luo Women and Economic Change during the Colonial Period" (cp)
Luise White, "Prostitution, Identity and Class Consciousness in Nairobi during World War II" (cp)

Week 11 (Nov. 14-18)

11/15 Christianity and the Making of Colonial Society

Reading: Gregory Maddox, "The Church and Cigogo" (cp)
James Giblin, "Family Life, Indigenous Culture & Christianity in Colonial Njombe" (cp)

Hand Out Exam

Peasant Politics and Mass Nationalism

11/17 The Origins of Mau Mau

Reading: David Anderson, "Prologue" and "The Hidden History of an Anti-Colonial Rebellion," in *Histories of the Hanged* (cp)

Week 12 (Nov. 21-25)

11/22 The Mau Mau War and Its Aftermath

Reading: David Anderson, "General China's War: Freedom Fighters in the Forests" (cp)

EXAM DUE IN CLASS

11/24 No Class: Thanksgiving

Week 13 (Nov. 28-Dec. 2)

11/29 Independence in Tanzania and Uganda

Reading: Gardner Thompson, "The 1950s: Cul-de-sac Colonialism and the Colonial Legacy" (cp)
Julius Nyerere, "Introduction," in *Freedom and Unity*

The Hopes and Frustrations of Independence

12/1 The Problems and Failures of 'Development'

Reading: no reading – work on exams

Week 14 (Dec. 5-9)

12/6 The Creation of Tribes in Modern Africa

Reading: John Iliffe, "The Creation of Tribes" (cp)
Jomo Kenyatta, "Preface" in *Facing Mount Kenya* (cp)

12/8 The Roots of Ethnic Violence in Rwanda

Reading: Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You*, 15-84

Week 15 (Dec. 12-16)

12/13 Genocide in Rwanda

Reading: Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You*, 84-171

12/15 Conclusion: Africa in the 21st Century: hope or despair?