

History 444: History of East Africa

Neil Kodesh

Spring 2007

Office hours: Tuesdays 2-4

TA: Ben Twagira

kodesh@wisc.edu

1651 Humanities

5114 Humanities

betwagira@wisc.edu

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 in the precolonial period, 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.

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*

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.

ASSIGNMENTS

- 1) Take-home exam covering weeks 1-4. The exam will be handed out in class on 2/15 and will be due in class on 2/22
- 2) 5-page paper on Jonathon Glassman's *Feasts and Riot*. Paper topics will be handed out in class on 3/13 and the paper will be due in class on 3/20
- 3) Attend one panel at the symposium on the crisis in Darfur to be held at the Pyle Center on April 28 and write a 1-page commentary. Due in class on 5/1
- 4) Take-home final exam. The exam will be handed out in class on 5/10 and will be due on 5/16 by 2 p.m.

EVALUATION

Mid-term: 20%

Feasts and Riot Paper: 20%

Final: 35%

Participation in discussion sections and Darfur commentary: 25%

SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS

Week 1 (Jan. 22-26)

1/23 Knowing Africa: Preconceptions and Misconceptions

1/25 Ideals of Social Organization and Finding Our Way into the Distant Past

Curtis Keim, "How We Learn" (cp)

John McCall, "Social Organization in Africa" (cp)

Week 2 (Jan. 29-Feb.2)

1/30 Early Great Lakes History and the Cwezi Kubandwa Revolution

Jean-Pierre Chretien, "An Ancient Human Settlement," 41-70 (cp)

2/1 Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa in Precolonial Rwanda

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

Week 3 (Feb. 5-9)

2/6 Land and Power in Buganda

Holly Hanson, *Landed Obligation*, 25-87

2/8 Farmers, Herders, and the Pastoral Revolution

T. Spear, "Introduction," in *Being Maasai* 1-18 (cp)

Week 4 (Feb. 12-16)

2/13 Political Culture in Central Kenya

Charles Ambler, "The Formation of New Societies" (cp)

2/15 The Rise of Swahili Culture and the Classical Age of Swahili City-States

M. Horton and J. Middleton, "The Swahili Coast" and "The Trading System of the Swahili Coast," 89-103 (cp)

Hand Out Exam

Week 5 (Feb. 19-23)

2/20 No Class: work on exam

2/22 Commercial Expansion in the 19th Century

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

EXAM DUE IN CLASS

Week 6 (Feb. 26- Marh 2)

2/28 Transformations in Slavery

Glassman, *Feasts and Riot*, 79-114

3/1 Film: "The Swahili Coast"

Glassman, *Feasts and Riot*, 117-145

Week 7 (March 5-9)

3/6 Citizenship and Identity in Swahili Communities

Glassman, *Feasts and Riot*, 146-174

3/6 Invasion of the Mrima Coast

Finish reading Glassman, *Feasts and Riot*, **up to page 174.**

Week 8 (March 12-16)

3/13 The Establishment of Settler Colonialism in Kenya and the Christian Revolution in Buganda

Hanson, *Landed Obligation*, 93-126

Hand out paper topics

3/15 No class: work on paper

Week 9 (March 19-23)

3/20 Indirect Rule and the Construction of the Colonial State

Hanson, *Landed Obligation*, 127-163

PAPER DUE IN CLASS

3/22 The Colonial Economy: Land, Labor, and Chiefly Authority

Hanson, *Landed Obligation*, 165-202

Week 10 (March 26-30)

3/27 Healing as Social Criticism: Maji Maji and Nyabingi

Thaddeus Sunseri, "Reinterpreting a Colonial Rebellion: Forestry and Social Control in German East Africa, 1874-1915 (cp)

Holger B. Hansen, "The Colonial Control of Spirit Cults in Uganda (cp)

3/29 Disease and Authority in Early Colonial East Africa

Megan Vaughan, "The Great Dispensary in the Sky: Missionary Medicine" (cp)

Week 11 (April 2-6) SPRING BREAK

Week 12 (April 9-13)

4/10 Women, Migrant Labor, and the Transformation of Agricultural Production

Luise White, "Prostitution, Identity and Class Consciousness in Nairobi during World War II" (cp)

Lynn Thomas, "Imperial Concerns and 'Women's Affairs': State Efforts to Regulate Clitoridectomy and Eradicate Abortion in Meru, Kenya c.1910-1950" (cp)

4/12 Christianity and the Making of Colonial Society

Derek Peterson, "Wordy Women: Gender Trouble and the Oral Politics of the East African Revival in Northern Gikuyuland" (cp)

Week 13 (April 16-20)

4/17 The Origins of Mau Mau

David Anderson, "Prologue: The Hanged" and "The Hidden History of Anti-Colonial Rebellion" (cp)

4/19 The Mau Mau War and its Aftermath

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

Week 14 (April 23-27)

4/24 Independence in Tanzania and Uganda

Julius Nyerere, "Introduction," in *Freedom and Unity* (cp)

4/26 Crisis in Darfur

Alex de Waal, "Tragedy in Darfur"
<http://www.bostonreview.net/BR29.5/dewaal.html> (link available on Learn@UW)

Attend Darfur symposium on Saturday, April 28

Week 15 (April 30-May 4)

5/1 The Roots of Ethnic Violence in Rwanda

Scott Strauss, "Introduction" and "Background to Genocide"

REPORTS ON DARFUR SYMPOSIUM DUE IN CLASS

5/3 Genocide in Rwanda

Scott Strauss, "Why Perpetrators Say They Committed Genocide" and "The Logic of Genocide"

Week 16 (May 7-11)

5/8 The Problems and Failures of 'Development'

Robert Calderisi, "Tanzania: African Socialism"

5/10 Conclusion: Africa in the 21st Century: hope or despair?