Anthropology 403B.003
Ethnography of East Africa and the Swahili Coast
Term 1 (Sep 03, 2014 to Nov 29, 2014)

Instructor: Dr. Vinay R. Kamat
Class: Tuesday, Thursday
Time: 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Room: 2012 Earthsciences Building
Office hours: Tue, Thu, 1:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
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Course Description

These studies have engaged topics such as the slave trade, long distance migration, colonialism, nationalism, independence movements, religion, identity politics, music, gender, sexuality, health, ecotourism and conservation, and so forth. In the western popular imagination, East Africa invokes images of wildlife and safaris, the Serengeti National Park, the Masai warriors, Mount Kilimanjaro, and the Dhowos along the exotic spice island of Zanzibar (unguja). This course, however, is designed to go beyond the trope of “the exotic and the authentic”– and focus on the everyday lifeworlds of the peoples who inhabit East Africa’s Swahili coast. But how does one reference the Swahili Coast? Who are the Swahili-speaking peoples of the East African coast? Is there a distinct Swahili identity? What do we mean by Swahili culture and Swahili lifeworlds? Is there a distinct Swahili Philosophy? Why has the Swahili coast played such an important role in the historical and political consciousness of the peoples of East Africa and the African continent in general? Why do East Africa and the Swahili Coast continue to fascinate historians and anthropologists (archeologists and ethnographers included) and provide the context for their research and writing?
This course is designed precisely to explore the historical, political and ethnographic context of the Swahili Coast and the peoples who inhabit this region, and the region’s significance for the development of anthropological theory and practice. The course draws on interdisciplinary and ethnographic literature and focuses on the Swahili peoples, their history, political lives and cultures. The course will provide students with an opportunity to appreciate this region’s role in world history and the flourishing of anthropological and ethnographic literature about East Africa in general. Through a discussion of the assigned readings, films and in-class group presentations, students will explore the analytical links between issues of historical and anthropological interest such as colonialism, kinship, ethnic relations, religion, gender, sexuality, health, among others, as highlighted in historically-grounded ethnographies of small-scale coastal communities and the wider historical and political contexts and processes in which they are embedded.

The course is divided into two sections. The first half of the course will focus on the geographic, historical and political aspects of East Africa. Students will engage relevant scholarship concerning the historical and social construction of East Africa. They will become familiar with the region’s geography and history by reading some key texts and articles. The second half of the class will focus on the historically grounded ethnographic literature pertaining to the Swahili Coast. Students will read book length ethnographies such as Janet McKintosh’s (2009) *The Edge of Islam: Power, Personhood and Ethnoreligious Boundries on the Kenya Coast*, and ethnographically grounded research papers and articles such as, for example, Katrina Thompson’s (2011) *Zanzibari Women’s discursive and sexual agency*, that will enable them to appreciate “the world of the Swahili.” They will examine the roles that women have played in the economy, politics and religion and how these roles have changed with the spread of Islam in East Africa, European conquest and colonialism, and finally independence and globalism. The capstone project will be a 15 page research paper analyzing some aspects of the Swahili’s Coast’s history and ethnography, and will include an exposition and an academic argument.

Students who register for this course should be aware that the course involves a substantial amount of reading approximately (50-80 pages per week), in-class discussions and writing. Everyone is expected to have read the week’s readings before class. Students who have not been previously, substantially exposed to the historical and ethnographic literature on Africa must consult with the instructor at the start of the course so that arrangements can be made to discuss additional required reading.

**Course Goals**

1. To contextualize East African history in regional, continental, and global perspective (for example, long distance trade between East Africa and India), especially in the context of globalization and neoliberal politics.
2. To develop awareness and sensitivity among the students to the region’s history, diversity and its place in global politics, and to investigate western depictions/preconceived notions about East Africa as emblematic of “wild life and safari”, and the Swahili Coast as inhabited by peoples who are dogmatic and “stuck in the past.”
3. To consider how and why historians, political scientists, linguistic and cultural anthropologists write about the Swahili Coast.
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4. To learn to critically evaluate the literature from and about East Africa and particularly the Swahili Coast.
5. To sharpen students’ abilities to express their thoughts through reading, speaking, researching, and writing about East Africa, and particularly the Swahili Coast.
6. To cultivate students’ skills in analytical thinking, engaging discussion, and expressing ideas in a non-threatening, non-intimidating environment.
7. To understand current events in East Africa in global, historical context.

The course will address student-specific interests and further academic skills through independently researching, presenting, and writing an original research paper.

REQUIRED BOOKS (available at the UBC bookstore, online, and on the reserve shelf under ANTH 403B at the Koerner Library)


RECOMMENDED BOOKS


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Class Schedule and Format
The general organization and schedule of the class will be as follows:

I will lecture and lead the discussion on the day’s assigned readings or on the week’s theme. In terms of my pedagogical style, I like to engage the class in seminar style questions and answers, which are accompanied by discussions on the materials assigned for the day. Starting Week 6 onwards, the Thursday class will be reserved for the assigned group of students who will make brief presentations and engage the class in a discussion on assigned articles and chapters. Films and videos relevant to the week’s theme will be shown in class. The first half of class time will be reserved for a film and the second half of class time will emphasize classroom discussion and small group analysis. Details of the films and videos will be provided to you as soon as I have confirmed their availability for in-class screening.

Exams and Grading
Mid-Term Exam — October 16th 20%
Final Exam (Essay Format) — TBA 30%
World of the Swahili Paper — November 27th 30%
Class Participation — 20%
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(Attendance plus Class Discussion 10% and Group Class Presentation 10%) ~~~

Your final grade will be determined by a Mid-Term Exam, a Final Exam, Class Participation (regular attendance, group discussions, group class presentations), and a World of the Swahili Paper. The specific topic will be chosen in consultation with the instructor. The length of the project should be 15 pages, typed, double-spaced, excluding endnotes and references cited. The due date for the term paper is on or before the last day of class. Please note that THIS IS A FIRM DATE. Guidelines for the project will be given to you during the third week of September 2013. A one-page (double-spaced) outline of your project is due via email on or before November 4th. I will give my preliminary comments and suggestions on your proposed research paper within three days after you have handed in your outline. I strongly encourage you to start early and to discuss the topic and ideas about your research project with me well in advance of actually writing the outline.

DETAILS

Mid-Term Exam: This will be an in class exam. The format will include ten true/false, ten multiple choice items, and two short essays worth 5 points each.

Final Exam: You will be required to answer any two out of three essay questions worth 15 points each. Both essays should each be 7-8 pages, handwritten, double-spaced. I will grade your essays and all your other assignments relative to one another, i.e., in comparison with the assignments and exams written by your classmates. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please do not hesitate to clarify this with me during my office hours.

Discussion Responsibility and Class Participation
This is a significant portion of your grade, and it is measured in various ways. Most importantly, it includes keeping up with your readings and making thoughtful contributions to class discussions. Therefore, regular class attendance is very important. Repeated absences will adversely affect your grade. Your participation in class discussions will be enhanced if you read the assigned material well in advance.

Research Paper (Referenced, Reflection and Synthesis Project) Students will write one well-structured essay on the broadly defined theme of ‘the world of the Swahili.’ A preliminary outline of the research paper—one page in length (typed, double-spaced) — must be submitted to me two weeks before the due date. You will need to write the paper based on a combination of the materials you will read for this class and the materials you will research in the library. The specific topic on which you will write the paper may be decided in consultation with me. The paper, should, however, focus on some aspect of the Swahili Coast. It will count as 30% of the final grade. The length of the second paper should be 15 pages, double-spaced, excluding endnotes and references cited. You will have the opportunity to develop your final essays over several days by integrating assigned readings, lectures, and library research. As a reminder, the five secrets to good writing are write, rewrite, revise, revise, and revise. See for details Zinsser William Knowlton (2001) On Writing Well: An Informal Guide to Writing Nonfiction. New York, New York: Harper Perennial; Michael Murphy’s Writing Tools for Anthropology Students; Jim Bindon’s Rules for Writing a Research Paper.
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Please use the AAA Style Guide for the references and the format of the paper. You can access the AAA Style Guide at: http://www.aaanet.org/pubs/style_guide.pdf

Policies
Please make a note of my office hours, and do not hesitate to discuss any concerns that you may have about class material, assignments or grading during my office hours. If you are unable to see me during scheduled office hours on any of the two days, you should schedule an appointment with me, well in advance, and preferably via email. All papers must be turned in on time. Please submit all your assignments to me directly on or before the deadline date. Only print copies of all your assignments are accepted. Assignments submitted as email attachments will NOT be accepted. In fairness to all students who have met the deadline, late papers will be marked down by half a letter grade for every day they are late, with exceptions made only for severe illness or emergency. If extraordinary circumstances prevail that make it impossible for you to meet a deadline, please contact me as soon as possible (prior to turning in late work for review). Deferrals and incompletes will be given only in accordance with UBC policy as set forth in the catalogue. Unless you are already familiar with UBC’s Office of Equity and its policies, I would urge you to do so. Furthermore, please revisit and update yourself with UBC’s policy on plagiarism. Please note that according to the Faculty of Arts, Faculty Grading Guidelines “results in an average class of reasonable size will normally fall somewhere within the following broad limits:

- Grade “A” 5% to 25% of the class
- Grades “A” and “B” combined not more than 75% of the class
- Grade “F” not over 20% of the class”

For further details, please see http://www.arts.ubc.ca/Grading_Guidelines.81.0.html

General Schedule/Topics

1. Week 1 (Sept 2/4) Geography, Peoples and Ethnoscapes of East Africa
2. Week 2 (Sept 9/11) Scramble for East Africa – Conquest, Colonialism & Imperialism
3. Week 3 (Sept 16/18) Resistance, Nationalism (Maji Maji, Mau Mau, Zanzibar Revolution)
5. Week 5 (Sept 30/Oct 2) Independence and Regional Politics in East Africa – II
6. Week 6 (Oct 7/9) The World of the Swahili - I
7. Week 7 (Oct 14/16) The World of the Swahili - II
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8. Week 8  (Oct 21/23)  Kinship, Ethnic Identities
9. Week 9  (Oct 28/30)  Religion -- Islam, Christianity
10. Week 10  (Nov 4/6)  Gender and Sexuality
11. Week 11  (Nov 11/13)  Health and Development
12. Week 12  (Nov 18/20)  Youth, Music, Language (Taraab, hip-hop, rap, Sheng)

Required Readings and Lecture Schedule

Week 1. Preliminaries: Geography, Peoples and Ethnoscapes of East Africa

*Tuesday, September 02, 2014*
Ferguson, James
Ndee, H.S.
http://www.granta.com/Archive/92/How-to-Write-about-Africa/Page-1

*Thursday, September 04, 2014*
Bruner, Edward M.
Bruner, Edward M.
Rosaldo, Renato

Week 2. Scramble for East Africa – Conquest and Imperialism

*Tuesday, September 9, 2014*
Maxon, Robert
Dunn, Kevin

*Thursday, September 11, 2014*
Babau, Cheik Anta
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Bissel, William

Week 3. Resistance and Nationalism
Tuesday, September 16, 2014
Maxon, Robert

Iliffe, John

Thursday, September 18, 2014
Sunseri, Thaddeus

Becker, Felicitas

Week 4. Independence and Regional Politics in East Africa -- Kenya
Tuesday, September 23, 2014
Rosenstiel, Annette
1953 An Anthropological Approach to the Mau Mau Problem. Political Science Quarterly 68 (3):419-432

Bennett, Huw

FILM/VIDEO Mau Mau Rebellion/Revolutionaries of Kenya
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z74i_H6klrg
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4qrQltB8m_w

Thursday, September 25, 2014
Prestholdt, Jerenmy

Willis, Justin and George Gona

FILM/VIDEO A Time There Was: Stories from the Last Days of Kenya Colony
FILM/VIDEO Out of Africa

Kresse, Kai
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**Week 5. Independence and Regional Politics in East Africa – Tanzania**

*Tuesday, September 30, 2014*

Stoger-Eising, Viktoria


Kamat, Vinay

2008 This is not our culture! Discourse of nostalgia and narratives of health concerns in post-socialist Tanzania. *Africa* 73(3):359-383.

Lal, Priya


*Thursday, October 02, 2014*

Topan, Farouk


Mukuthuria, Mwenda


Crozon, Ariel


**Week 6. The World of the Swahili - I**

*Tuesday, October 7, 2014*

Eastman, Carol M.

1971 Who are the Swahili? *Africa* 41:228-236.

Caplan, Pat


**FILM/VIDEO** Henry Louis Gates “The Swahili”


**FILM/VIDEO** *The Swahili Beat: An Introduction to the History of the East African Coast*

*Thursday, October 9, 2014*

Middleton, John


**Week 7. The World of the Swahili - II**

*Tuesday, October 14, 2014*

Middleton, John

Mazrui, Alamin M., and Ibrahim Noor Shariff

Thursday, October 16, 2014

Mid-Term Exam

Week 8. Kinship and Ethnic Identities
Tuesday, October 21, 2014
Eastman, Carol M.

Eastman, Carol M.

Thursday, October 23, 2014
Giles, Linda L.

Larsen, Kjersti

Larsen, Kjersti

Week 9. Religion – Islam, Christianity
Tuesday, October 28, 2014
McKintosh, Janet
2009 The Edge of Islam: Power, Personhood, and Ethno-religious Boundaries on the Kenya Coast. Durham, Duke University Press. [Introduction and Chapter1]

Thursday, October 30, 2014
McKintosh, Janet
2009 The Edge of Islam: Power, Personhood, and Ethno-religious Boundaries on the Kenya Coast. Durham, Duke University Press. [Chapters 2 and 5]

Week 10. Gender and Sexuality
Tuesday, November 04, 2014
Askew, Kelly M

Stiles, Erin
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2005 “There is no stranger to marriage here!” Muslim women and divorce in rural Zanzibar.” Africa 75(4): 582-598.
Stiles, Erin E.

Thursday, November 06, 2014
Thompson, Katrina Daly
Thompson, Katrina Daly
Thompson, Katrina Daly

Week 11. Health and Development
Tuesday, November 11, 2014 REMEMBRANCE DAY. University Closed.
Thursday, November 13, 2014
Rekdal, Ole Bjorn
Kamat, Vinay
Hsu, Elisabeth

Week 12. Youth, Music, Language
Tuesday, November 18, 2014
Samper, David A.
Eisenberg, Andrew
Kidula, Jean Ngoy

Thursday, November 20, 2014
Perullo, Alex
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qD7z_jwI2rw
Hali Halisi - a documentary from 1999 on hip hop in Tanzania

Englert, Birgit
2008  *Kuchanganyachanganya* – topic and language choices in Tanzanian youth culture.

**Week 13. Ecotourism, Conservation and Development Politics**

*Tuesday, November 25, 2014*

Brockington, Dan

*Thursday, November 27, 2014*

Igoe, Jim
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RECOMMENDED READINGS

Week 1 & 2. Recommended Readings

Bissel, William

Cooper, Fredrick.

Maxon, Robert

Southall, Aiden W.

Glassman, Jonathon

Henderson, Clara

Mandelsohn, Richard and Vivian Bickford-Smith

Beinart, William

Week 3. Recommended Readings

Monson, Jamie

Sunseri, Thaddeus

Gewald, Jan-Bart

Greenstein, Elijah

Zimmerman, Andrew
Week 4. Recommended Readings

Moore, Sally Falk

Caplan, Pat

Cooper, Frederick

Branch, Daniel

Lonsdale, John

Hughes, Lotte

Clough, Marshall S.

Maxon, Robert

Seesemann, R

Gearhart, Rebecca

Mwangi, Oscar Gakuo

Morrison, Lesa B

Amoko, Apollo O.

Makinen, Maarin and Mary Wangu Kuira

Manji, Ambreena

Week 5. Recommended Readings
Lal, Priya  

Monson, Jamie  

Monson, Jamie  

Harrison, Graham  

Snyder, Katherine  

Askew, Kelly M.  

**Week 6. Recommended Readings**

De Vere Allen, James  

Mazrui Alamin M and Ibrahim Noor Shariff  

de Vere, Allen James  

Speare, Thomas  

Middleton, John  

Mazrui, Ali A., and Alamin M. Mazrui  

Parkin, David  

Pellow, Deborah  
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Prins, Adriaan H.J.

Salim, Ahmed Idha

Spear, Thomas

Spear, Thomas

Swartz, Marc J.

Willis, Justin

Prestholdt, Jeremy

Week 7. Recommended Readings

Caplan, Pat

Fleisher, Jeffrey Fleisher

Bertz, Ned

Willis, Justin and Suzanne Miers.

Week 8. Recommended Readings

Giles, Linda

Giles, Linda L

Giles, Linda L.
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Giles, Linda L

Giles, Linda L

Larsen, Kjersti, Ed.

Larsen, Kjersti

Walsh, Martin

Mcintosh, Janet

Becker, Felicitas
2009 Islamic reform and historical change in the care of the dead: Conflicts over funerary practice among Tanzanian Muslims. Africa 79(3).

Loimeier, Roman

Simpson, E and K Kresse

Middleton, John., and E.H. Winter

Smith, James H.

Lienhardt, Peter,

Kresse, Kai
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Kresse, Kai


Kreeese, Kai

2009  "Knowledge and intellectual practice in a Swahili context: 'wisdom' and the social dimensions of knowledge." *Africa* 79(1).

Brycceson, Deborah F, Jesper Bosse Jonsson, et al.


Haar, Gerrie tar and Stephen Ellis

2009  The occult does not exist: A response to Terence Ranger. *Africa* 79(3).

**Week 9. Recommended Readings**

Mirza, Sarah and Margaret Strobel, eds


Nyanzi, Stella, Justine Nassimbwa, et al.


Spronk, Rachel


Gower, Rebecca., Stevan Salm and Toyin Falola


Campbell, Carol A., and Carol M. Eastman


**Week 10. Recommended Readings**

Beck, Rose Marie


Gearhart, Rebecca


McCurd, Sheryl


Simala, Inyani K.


Ivanov, Paola


Boswell, Rosabelle

18

**Week 11. Recommended Readings**

Beckerleg, Susan

Bryceson, Deborah F.

Howard, Mary

Parkin, David

**Week 12. Recommended Readings**

Casco, Jose Arturo Saavedra

Englert, Birgit

Burgess, Thomas

Githinji, Peter

Mungai, Mbugua wa and David Samper

Mutongi, Kenda

Thompson, Katrina Daly

Thompson, Katrina Daly

Waller, Richard
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Perullo, Alex

Clark, Msia Kibona

Smith, Christopher Holmes

Stroeken, Koen

Week 13. Recommended Readings
Walley, Christine