

**The East African coast from the 1c CE to 1800 CE
L48 3184 Spring 2024**

Location:

Time: T/Th 11:30 – 12:50PM

Instructor: Sewasew Assefa (She/her)

Office: McMillan 318

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Office hours: TBD

Course Description

This course is designed to provide students a broad and critical understanding of the history and archaeology of the East African coast and its global interconnections. Beginning with an introduction to the methodological and theoretical approaches of African history and archaeology, the course surveys archaeological and historical research focusing on the East coast of Africa (Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, and offshore Islands). Temporally, this course will range from the Early Iron age to 1800 CE. Topics include geography and environmental history, periodization, foodways, urbanism, craftsmanship, architecture, cross-cultural exchange and materiality, belief systems and current conservation and heritage preservation efforts. This course combines lectures and class discussions for a critical use of contemporary sources, oral histories, and archaeological discoveries.

Course objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Identify locations of important geographic features and archaeological sites.
2. Discuss the history and archaeology of the East coast of Africa through a critical lens.
3. Analyze the reconstruction and presentation of the past through close reading and discussion of primary and secondary historical and archaeological sources.
4. Relate and explain major social, technological, economic, and political developments in the East coast of Africa.
5. Articulate the relevance of African history and archaeology to our understanding of human societies.
6. Compose an essay or creative project (OpEd, music, art, video etc) showcasing at least one aspect of East African past using at least one primary historical and one archaeological document.

Prerequisites: None

Required Textbooks, materials, and supplies:

Wynne-Jones, S., & LaViolette, A. (Eds.). (2017). *The Swahili World* (1st ed.).
Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315691459>

Additional optional readings will be provided on the canvas portal.

Course component:

Pre-session reflections: The class incorporates significant amount of discussion. The success of the course depends on everyone's active engagement. Pre-session reflections are intended to encourage the reading of assigned texts and to guide in-class discussions. These are short reflections that include one positive, one critical observation and 2 questions regarding the document. Pre-session reflections will account for 30% of your total grade.

In-class discussions: Each class is composed of introductory lectures and discussion of reading material. Discussion will account for majority of class time and will count for 20% of your overall grade.

Site review presentation: You will select a site that you would like to explore and present as a case study. This is a short 5-10min presentation regarding the site and its contribution to our understanding of the East African coast. The presentations will occur throughout the semester and are worth 10% of your grade.

Project/Essay: There will be an option of a final essay or project. This will be broken down to project idea (10%), first draft (10%), and final draft (20%) due at weeks 6, 10, and 15. This essay/project must engage with an aspect of the East coast of Africa. However, you may choose the topic, time period, or location of the essay/project. All components of the project/essay will collectively make up 40% of your grade.

Grade scale:

Grading Scale	
97.00-100%	A+
93.00-96.99%	A
90-92%	A-
87-89%	B+
83-86%	B
80-82%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
65.00-69.00%	D
Below 64.99	F

Attendance policy:

Attendance is required for all class periods. If you must miss a class, notify me as early as possible so we can plan how to best accommodate and catch you up. I am happy to go over any material you have missed and questions you may have during consultation hours.

Late work:

Majority of your grade is associated with weekly reflections, in-class discussions, and one site presentation which are time sensitive. As such late work will impede the successful progress of the course and your ability to engage with the course in a timely manner. However, late submission will be accepted under documented circumstances for partial grades.

Washington University Policies

Washington University Policies can be found in the Student Orientation Module on Canvas under the Syllabus Appendices page. These include institutional policies and resources on the following topics:

- Academic Support
- Post-Break Policy
- Inclusive Learning Environment
- Course Evaluations
- Bias Reporting
- Academic Calendar
- Academic Integrity
- Reporting Sexual Harassment

- Religious Holiday Class Absence Policy
- Grades of “Incomplete”
- Academic Accommodations
- WUSTL COVID Policies

Course Schedule

	Date	Topics	Text book Readings
Research terminology	Wed Jan 17 2024 (Week 1)	Terminology; History for whom?	Note on terminology; Ch 4
	Mon Jan 22 2024 (Week 2)	Archaeology, history, oral history	Ch 1; Ch 10
Landscape	Mon Jan 22 2024 (Week 2)	Geography	Ch 2
	Wed Jan 24 2024	Climate and environment	Ch 2
Identity	Mon Jan 29 2024 (Week 3)	People of the coast/ Defining Swahili	Ch 5; Ch 9; Ch 29
	Wed Jan 31 2024	Genetics / language	Ch 6; Ch 8
Subsistence	Mon Feb 05 2024 (Week 4)	Plants	Ch 33
	Wed Feb 07 2024	Animals	Ch 32
Trade	Mon Feb 12 2024 (Week 5)	Emergence of trade	Ch 34; Ch 42
	Wed Feb 14 2024	In land trade	Ch 36; Ch 37
	Mon Feb 19 2024 (Week 6)	Caravan routes	Ch 47
	Wed Feb 21 2024	Dhow trade	Ch 35
	Mon Feb 26 2024 (Week 7)	Global trade- Indian ocean	Ch 38
	Wed Feb 28 2024	Global trade- East Asia	Ch 39
Religion	Mon Mar 04 2024 (Week 8)	Traditional beliefs	
	Wed Mar 06 2024	Islam	
Spring Break	Mon Mar 11 2024 (Week 9)		
	Wed Mar 13 2024		
Craft industry	Mon Mar 18 2024 (Week 10)	Craft industry	Ch 31; Ch 41
	Wed Mar 20 2024	Metal working	Ch 30
Architecture	Mon Mar 25 2024 (Week 11)	Houses	Ch 44 / ch 55
	Wed Mar 27 2024	tombs/ mosques	Ch 43
Competition	Mon Apr 01 2024 (Week 12)	Within city states	
	Wed Apr 03 2024	Regional competition	Ch 40

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Colonialism and resistance	Mon Apr 08 2024 (Week 13)	Global competition	
	Wed Apr 10 2024	Portuguese incursion	Ch 45
Conservation	Mon Apr 15 2024 (Week 14)	Monuments; Narrative;	Ch 56, Ch 52
	Wed Apr 17 2024	Knowledge transfer	Ch 48
	Mon Apr 22 2024 (Week 15)		
	Wed Apr 24 2024		