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Title: Feasts and riot: revelry, rebellion, and popular consciousness on the Swahili Coast, 1856-1888

Author: [Glassman, Jonathon](#)

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This book - which uses an approach derived from the writings of Antonio Gramsci - analyses the context of the massive rebellion that erupted in present-day Tanzania in 1888, when officials of the German East Africa Company (DOAG) attempted to establish a civil administration in the Muslim towns of the Swahili coast. For most of the 19th century the coast had been ruled by the Omani merchant-princes of Zanzibar, whose commercial policies contributed to the expansion of the long-distance caravan trade organized by Swahili-speaking 'Shirazi' African patricians. Commerce also brought slaves from the interior to suffer on the sugar plantations. The 1888 rebellion started at the time when villagers and

Abstract:

slaves celebrated the Solar New Year and the Islamic feast of Idd al-Hajj and were engaged in carnival revelries that openly mocked all constitutive authority. German desecration of the mosque in Pangani sparked off the flame of the rebellion that would destroy Omani State authority. A broad but loose alliance of patricians, lower-class townspeople, peasants and slaves soon turned the local insurrection into a coast-wide rebellion, forcing the Germans to turn a private venture into a formal colony and abandon plans to rule through Arab authority. The book is based on oral information and on German, British and Tanzanian archival sources.

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