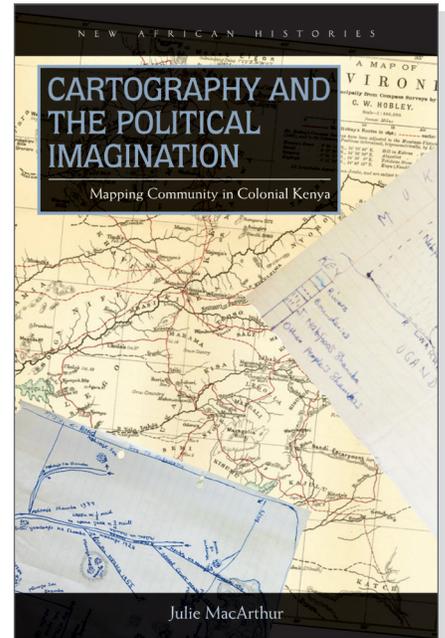


CARTOGRAPHY AND THE POLITICAL IMAGINATION

Mapping Community in Colonial Kenya

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STUDY GUIDE

INTRODUCTION: MAPPING POLITICAL COMMUNITIES IN AFRICA

1. How have the meanings and understandings, both popular and academic, of “ethnicity” in Africa changed over the past sixty years? What are the limits of our current theories of ethnicity?
2. What defines an “ethnic patriot”?
3. What are the three principles of “cosmopolitanism” according to Kwame Anthony Appiah? How does the concept of “cosmopolitanism” relate to African history?
4. What is the relationship between gender and ethnicity?
5. What is the “spatial turn” in African history? How does a focus on geography and mapping help open up new questions for African history?
6. What kind of sources does the author use in this study? How might this impact the kinds of questions and analysis in the text?
7. According to the argument put forth in the introduction, how does a study of the making of the Luyia impact broader historical questions around identity, colonialism, geographic imaginations, conflict, and postcolonial nationalism?

CHAPTER 1: THE GEOGRAPHIES OF WESTERN KENYA

8. What role does the environment play in shaping history?
9. What kind of sources can be used to study pre-literate societies?



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10. Look at Figure 1.8 – How did early colonial administrators and ethnographers make sense of the ethnic diversity of western Kenya?
What impact did such maps have on creating new lines of community and new visions of geographic relations?
11. How were colonial boundaries created?
What means did Africans have to contest or reshape colonial boundaries?

**CHAPTER 2:
LAND, GOLD, AND
COMMISSIONING
THE “TRIBE”**

12. What is the definition of “decentralized despotism”?
13. What was the anti-Wanga campaign about?
What can this campaign tell us about the changes brought by the early decades of colonial rule?
14. How did the discovery of gold in western Kenya impact ongoing debates over land, authority, customary practices and identity?
15. What kind of local practices did Africans mobilize to fight against gold miners?
16. How did the gold rush affect men and women differently?
17. Why did the map become so important during the Kenya Land Commission?
18. In what ways did the gold rush give birth to a new “tribe”?

**CHAPTER 3:
ETHNIC PATRIOTISM
IN THE INTERWAR YEARS**

19. Why were the interwar years such a high tide for ethnic patriotic work?
20. How did young politicians in western Kenya attempt to claim the authority to speak for their imagined constituents?
21. What is the significance of naming to the making of communities?
What can we learn about the process of ethnogenesis through the kinds of names given or taken up by communities?
22. What role does history-writing play in the making of political communities?
23. What impact did the onset of World War Two have on the development of political activism and anti-colonialism in Kenya?

**CHAPTER 4:
SPEAKING LUYIA
LINGUISTIC WORK AND
POLITICAL IMAGINATION**

24. How have scholars understood the role of language, whether written or oral, in the making of political communities?
25. What does the linguistic diversity of western Kenya tell us about the histories of community formations in the region?
26. What impact did missionaries and the translation of the Bible have on African languages and political thought?
27. Who supported the attempt to create a Luyia language?
Who opposed this process, and why?
28. Why did the Luyia language project fail?
What does this failure tell us about plurality and multilingualism?

**CHAPTER 5:
MAPPING GENDER**

MORAL CRISIS AND
THE LIMITS OF COSMOPOLITAN
PLURALISM IN THE 1940S

29. Why were ethnic patriots so worried about the movements and behaviors of African women in the post-war era?
30. What role did football play in fostering ethnic solidarities, particularly for migrant communities and in the urban areas?
31. What made the female circumcision crisis in western Kenya unique? Who were the main figures driving the debate over this practice?
32. Why was the 1948 census so important to the work of ethnic patriots?
33. What was the relationship among the map, census, and customary law? Why did such demographic work matter in the context of the “panic” over morality in the 1940s?
34. What does the female circumcision crisis in western Kenya tell us about pluralism and ethnic work in the colonial era?

**CHAPTER 6:
BETWEEN LOYALISM
AND DISSENT**

ETHNIC GEOGRAPHIES
IN THE ERA OF MAU MAU

35. Who is Gerald Masibayi? What can his life story tell us about the politics of ethnicity during the Mau Mau rebellion?
36. What has “loyalism” meant in the context of late colonial Kenya? Why are debates around loyalism, both historically and in contemporary scholarship, so contentious?
37. What characterized the Dini ya Msambwa movement? Why were “frontiers” in their multiple forms important to its adherents?
38. What lessons did the colonial government learn from its campaign against Dini ya Msambwa that proved useful in their counterinsurgency against later Mau Mau rebels?
39. What was the new “Luyia idea” in the 1950s? How did claiming a Luyia identity open up opportunities to navigate the politics of loyalism and dissent?

**CHAPTER 7:
MAPPING DECOLONIZATION**

40. How do debates over boundaries help us rethink the relationship between decolonization and nationalism in Africa?
41. Why did mapping become such an important tool of dissent and political claims in Kenya?
42. How did the Kenya Regional Boundaries Commission encourage the territorialization of identity?
43. How do we explain the political pluralism of western Kenya?
44. Look at Figure 7.4 – How does this map make claims to political community, representation, and resources?
45. How did the imagining of a “Greater Luyia” challenge colonial boundaries and postcolonial nationalism?

**AFTERWORD:
BEYOND THE ETHNOS
AND THE NATION**

46. How do we move beyond “the ethnos and the nation” in African history? Are these still useful categories in the study of African history?
47. What new questions can we ask about decolonization and the postcolonial state if we focus on so-called “failed” political imaginaries?
48. What contemporary events reveal the continuing relevance of these conflicts over borders and identity?
49. What accounts for the “triumph” of the map in postcolonial Africa?