



# **Taifa: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania (New African Histories)**

*James R. Brennan*

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**Taifa: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania (New African Histories)** James R. Brennan  
**Winner of the 2013 Ogot Award for best book on East African Studies (sponsored by the African Studies Association)**

*Taifa* is a story of African intellectual agency, but it is also an account of how nation and race emerged out of the legal, social, and economic histories in one major city, Dar es Salaam. Nation and race — both translatable as *taifa* in Swahili — were not simply universal ideas brought to Africa by European colonizers, as previous studies assume. They were instead categories crafted by local African thinkers to make sense of deep inequalities, particularly those between local Africans and Indian immigrants. *Taifa* shows how nation and race became the key political categories to guide colonial and postcolonial life in this African city.

Using deeply researched archival and oral evidence, *Taifa* transforms our understanding of urban history and shows how concerns about access to credit and housing became intertwined with changing conceptions of nation and nationhood. *Taifa* gives equal attention to both Indians and Africans; in doing so, it demonstrates the significance of political and economic connections between coastal East Africa and India during the era of British colonialism, and illustrates how the project of racial nationalism largely severed these connections by the 1970s.

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