

ARKY 399
ETHNOHISTORY OF AFRICA
FALL 2009

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Lectures: Tuesday/Thursday 3:00-4:15 ST128

Office Hours: Wednesday: 1-2 pm or by appointment but email is preferred

Course Description

The Ethnohistory of Africa

This course explores the methods and approaches to the ethnohistory of Africa.

Examples are drawn from the Sahara and sub-Saharan Africa. Emphasis will be placed on a study of the material culture of non-industrial societies both in the present and the recent past, historic documents produced by Islamic, Asian and European travelers to Africa, written documents that constitute African's histories in their own words; language distribution, oral history, and other aspects of ethnohistory.

Readings can be downloaded from the University of Calgary library online journals.

A preliminary list of lectures (lecture topics and films may be modified but exam and assignment dates will remain the same):

Week 1: Sept. 8, 10

Introduction to the course and assignments

Introduction to ethnohistory

Readings:

Vansina, J. 1962. Ethnohistory in Africa. *Ethnohistory* 9(2):126-36.

Schmidt, Peter R., and Jonathan R. Walz. 2007. Re-presenting African pasts through historical archaeology *American antiquity* 72 (1): 53-70.

Week 2: Sept. 15, 17

Introduction to Africa (geography, climate, environment)

People and Languages of Africa

You might find this reading interesting (and an argument as to why material evidence is important to constructing African pasts)

Reading:

Ortiz de Montellano, Bernard, Gabriel Hslip Viera and Warren Barbour. They were NOT here before Columbus: Afrocentric Hyperdiffusionism in the 1990s. *Ethnohistory* 44(2):199-234.

Week 3: Sept. 22, 24

Africa as "people without history"

Map Quiz (10% of final grade)

Readings:

James, Deborah. 2009. Burial Sites, informal rights and lost kingdoms: contesting land claims in Mpumalanga, South Africa. *Africa* 79(2): 228-251.
Ballard, Chris. 2006. Strange alliance: Pygmies in the colonial imaginary. *World Archaeology* 38(1): 133-151.

Week 4: Sept. 29, Oct 1

Genetics and tooth modifications as an ethnohistorical tool

Readings:

MacEachern, Scott. 2000. Genes, Tribes, and African History. *Current Anthropology* 41(3):357-84.

MacEachern, Scott. 2006. Africanist archaeology and ancient IQ: racial science and cultural evolution in the twenty-first century. *World Archaeology* 38(1):72-92.

Film: *Lost Tribe of Israel*

Week 5: Oct. 6, 8

Revisionary history: the Kalahari Debate and the ethnohistory of Khoisan speakers in Southern Africa (Rock art, ethnography, and archaeology)

Readings:

Barnard, Alan. 2006. Kalahari Revisionism, Vienna, and the 'indigenous peoples' debate. *Social Anthropology* 14(1): 1-16.

Smith, Andrew B. 2001. Ethnohistory and archaeology of the Ju/'hoansi Bushmen. African study monographs supplementary issue 26:15-25.

Smith, Benjamin W. and Sven Ouzman. 2004. Taking Stock: identifying Khoekhoen herder rock art in southern Africa. *Current anthropology* 45 (4): 499-526.

Mitchell, Peter, and Gavin Whitelaw. 2005. The Archaeology of Southernmost Africa from c. 2000 BP to the early 1800s: A Review of Recent Research. *The Journal of African History* 46(2):209-241.

Exam 1: 20% of final grade (Thursday class)

Week 6: Oct. 13, 15

Ethnohistory of African iron working

Readings:

Alpern, Stanley B. 2005. Did or didn't they invent it? Iron in Sub-Saharan Africa. *History in Africa* 32: 41-94).

MacEachern, S. 1993. Selling the iron for their shackles: Wandala-"Montagnard" interactions in northern Cameroon. *Journal of African History* 34(2): 247-70.

Film: *Dokwaza: last of the iron masters*

Week 7: Oct. 20, 22

Using historical linguistics and archaeology: 'Bantu expansion', Bantu pastoralists, the origins of agriculture and other examples

Readings:

Bostoen, Koen. 2007. Pots, words and the Bantu problem: on lexical reconstruction and early African history. *Journal of African history* 48 (2): 173-99.

Ehret, Christopher (and a critique by David Shoenbrun). 2001. Bantu Expansions: Reinvisioning a Central Problem of Early African History. *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 34(2):5-41.

McMaster, Mary. 2005. Language shift and its reflection in African archaeology: cord rouletting in the Uele and Interlacustrine regions. *Azania* XL: 43-72.

Papers Due: 25% of final grade

Week 8: Oct 27, 29

Oral history: Testing oral tradition with material evidence: Origins of states in the Great Lakes Region and Highland Ethiopia

Film: *Secret Holy Land*

Week 9: Nov. 3, 5

Poster Presentations: Posters are due in Tuesday's class 15% of final grade

Week 10: Nov. 10 (Thursday is a holiday)

Ethnohistory of Ritual (Landscapes, shrines, and monuments)

Readings:

Chirikure, Shadreck. and Innocent Pikirayi. 2008. Inside and outside the dry stone walls: revisiting the material culture of Great Zimbabwe. *Antiquity* 82 (318): (2008): 976-993.

Insoll, Timothy. 2008. Negotiating the archaeology of destiny: an exploration of interpretive possibilities through Tallensi Shrines. *Journal of Social Archaeology* 8(3): 380-403.

Owens, Geoffrey Ross. 2006. The Shomvi: a precursor to global ethnoscaapes and indigenization in precolonial East Africa. *Ethnohistory* 53(4): 715-752.

Week 11: Nov. 17, 19

Ethnohistory of Ceramics and Trade

Exam 2: 20% of final grade (Tuesday class)

Readings:

Fowler, Kent D. 2006. Classification and collapse: the ethnohistory of Zulu ceramic use. *Southern African humanities* 18(2):93-117.

Steiner, Christopher B. 1985. Another image of Africa: Toward an ethnohistory of European cloth marketed in West Africa, 1873-1960. *Ethnohistory* 32(2): 31-110.

Week 12: Nov. 24, 26

Ethnohistory of the Slave Trade

Film: *Skeletons on the Sahara*

Readings:

Alexander, J. 2001. Islam, archaeology and slavery in Africa. *World archaeology* 33(1): 44-60.

Kelly, K. G. 1997. Using historically informed archaeology: seventeenth and eighteenth century Hueda/European interaction on the coast of Benin. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 28:77-95.

Monroe, J. Cameron. 2007. Continuity, revolution or evolution on the slave coast of West Africa? Royal architecture and political order in precolonial Dahomey. *Journal of African history* 48(3): 349-73.

Week 13: Dec. 1, 3

Ethnohistory in 'art'

Final Quiz: 10% of final grade (Thursday class)

Assignments: Paper and Poster Assignment

Paper: 25% of final grade

Poster: 15% of final grade

Paper: The paper assignment is linked to the poster presentation. Students will **select an appropriate topic that must be approved by the instructor no later than week 4**. The student will provide the instructor with a 10 page double-spaced research paper. The student is then to summarize their research in the format of a poster. The poster will be presented in class and each student will have approximately 5 minutes to present their poster to the class (time allotment will depend on the size of the class).

LIBRARY RESEARCH PAPER

20% of final grade

7 typewritten pages -- use a 10 or 12 point font size and normal page margins of 1.5" at the top of the page, 1" at the bottom and side margins of 1.5" on the left and approximately .5" on the right margin.

NOTE: The following information is not just a guideline. Your paper grade is based on the following categories: the selection of an appropriate topic, the analytical approach applied to the topic, the logical presentation of information and conclusions, proper source referencing, and the consistent use of an appropriate style guide.

TOPIC

Students must select a topic that is appropriate to the course. Students must submit a brief outline of their term paper by Monday of week 4 for approval by the instructor. Resources are thin for some topics, so please share resources with others working on the same topic.

STYLE

An important part of research is presenting information in a written format. You must use the American Antiquity Style Guide for this paper. This will be discussed in class.

REFERENCES

Scholarly writing requires crediting your sources. Reference all quotes, as well as any information, facts, ideas, figures, conclusions that you draw from other sources. Specify page number(s) for quotes and specific information; general concepts will require author and date only. There is no excuse for inadequate referencing. Failure to do so is plagiarism and will result in an F grade.

Footnote references are no longer in general use in the social sciences. The preferred form is shown in the following examples:

Barfield (1994:10) states that some have claimed the Iceman to be "...the most exciting find since Tutankhamun".

Recent archaeological study in West Africa has revised interpretations of trade in this region (Insoll & Shaw 1997).

Schele and Freidel (1990) provide an interpretation of Maya history from the decipherment of Mayan texts, art, and hieroglyphs.

REFERENCES CITED

The references cited section shows the depth of your library research. A minimum of 8-10 substantial sources is required for your term paper. All sources cited in the text must be listed in the References Cited section at the end of the paper.

References which you have read but have not cited in the text should not be listed in the References Cited section. Sources must be pertinent to the paper topic, be of a scientific nature and be as up-to-date as possible. All sources must be listed using the format provided in the style guide. Examples of that format are provided below. Authors are listed alphabetically and each author's articles are listed chronologically. If two sources by the same author have the same publication year, use `a' and `b' (e.g. 1988a).

Do not use lecture notes, dictionaries, encyclopaedias or textbooks as references as these are not primary sources. Internet sources are not always reliable. See the instructor before using a website as a source. You cannot use more than 2 approved websites for this assignment without prior permission from the instructor.

Barfield, Lawrence

1994 The iceman reviewed. *Antiquity* 68:10-26.

Insoll, Timothy and Thurstan Shaw

1997 Gao and Igbo-Ukwu: beads, interregional trade, and beyond. *African Archaeological Review* 14(1):9-23.

Schele, Linda and David Freidel

1990 *A Forest of Kings*. Quill, New York.

PAPER OUTLINE GUIDE

A good scientific paper is one which is well-organized. This requires a clear statement of what the paper is to address, a concise presentation of the data pertinent to the topic, and a thorough summary and discussion by the student. The following provides you with a 3 step approach to organizing and writing a term paper. The grade will be evaluated on the basis of the paper's organization and clarity, the consistent use of a social science style guide, the appropriateness of the topic for the course, the selection of source material, and the student's assessment of the data presented.

Paper Value: 25% of final grade (or 25 points in the following grade breakdown)

1. Statement of paper thesis (2 points)

The first few paragraphs should make a clear statement of what the paper is to address. This might take the form of a pro and con argument that involves contrasting

different interpretations of two or more archaeologists on a particular topic. If you do not have a pro or con argument you might pose a question or questions around the interpretation of an event in the past or the advantages of different types of techniques for recovering archaeological information. The pro/con arguments or the questions posed, provides a framework for the data presented and the conclusions that are drawn. This statement should be approximately half to one page in length.

2. Present the data (20 points – note that 2 of these points are allotted to proper use of the style guide)

In the second part of the paper present the information drawn from the literature. Make sure to cite all sources where appropriate. Do not rely too heavily on a single source. Use the most recent material that is available on a topic.

This section is descriptive. Be concise. Make a clear summary of the ideas presented by the sources. Avoid the use of long quotations and if possible avoid using quotations entirely. Present information in your own words. This clearly shows how well you understood the literature. Use the following test. If you have read an article and cannot summarize the basic points from that source when you have finished, read it again.

The presentation of the data will take up the bulk of the paper (approximately 5 - 6 pages). Students should refer to at least 8-10 major sources for your research (do not use lecture notes, encyclopaedias, dictionaries, or popular magazines).

3. Discussion and conclusion (3 points)

In this section, present a short summary of the data in a single paragraph. This section should be dedicated to presenting an interpretation of the issues presented. If you have presented a pro and con argument, then which argument is the most logical and why? Perhaps none of the opinions presented in the anthropological literature convince you. State why. Your interpretation should be more developed than a yes or no answer. This section of the paper should be 1 or 1.5 pages.

Course Evaluation

Map quiz	10%
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Final Quiz	10%
Paper	25%
Poster & Presentation	15%

Grading Scheme:

96-100	A+
91-95	A
86-90	A-
81-85	B+
76-80	B
71-75	B-

66-70	C+
61-65	C
56-60	C-
53-55	D+
51-52	D
below 50	F